True Confessions

THE MAGAZINE FOR A BETTER LIFE

A FAWCETT MAGAZINE

SEPTEMBER

Still 10¢

THE WIPS
PAGE 8

A Lovely Skin is a Call to Arms—

See how soon the Camay Mild-Soap Diet gives you new loveliness

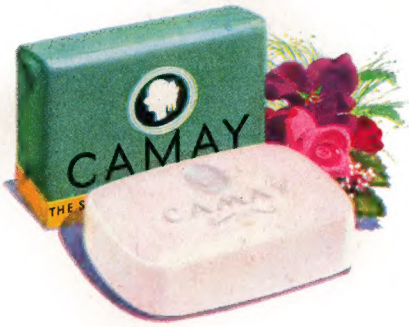
To win and hold the heart of one you love—make this pledge to yourself—*a pledge that new loveliness shall be yours!* Go on the Camay Mild-Soap Diet—tonight!

Remember—skin specialists advise a Mild-Soap Diet. Yes, Camay gives your skin the *mild* cleansing that these specialists say actually helps your skin to new beauty! So start tonight! Go on the Camay Mild-Soap Diet! See how soon this change to proper mild cleansing brings new loveliness to your complexion. Day-by-day with Camay, your skin looks smoother, fresher, till—new beauty is yours!

Tonight —go on the CAMAY MILD-SOAP DIET!

TONIGHT DO THIS:

CREAM CAMAY'S LATHER ON—ESPECIALLY OVER NOSE, CHIN. RINSE WARM—IF YOUR SKIN'S OILY, SPLASH COLD! REPEAT NEXT MORNING!



SAVE on Soap!

It's Patriotic!

Make each Cake of Camay Last Longer!

Take Camay from water! As soon as you've worked up a fragrant Camay lather, put your Camay cake back in soap dish to dry!

Keep soap dish dry! Wet, poorly-drained soap dishes waste soap away. Dry your soap dish—to make your Camay cake last longer!

Use every sliver! Make a bathmit out of an old washcloth and put your Camay soap slivers inside. Grand for lathering!

Smile, Plain Girl, Smile..

...the Crowd will follow a Lovely Smile!

Let your smile win you friends and happiness. Help keep it sparkling with Ipana and Massage.

TAKE HEART, plain girl—and *smile!* The popular girl isn't always the best-looking one. Charm and personality take as many bouquets as beauty—and a bright, flashing, heart-winning smile can be your talisman to charm.

So *smile, plain girl, smile!* Not a shy, timid smile—that fades almost before it's born. But a big, appealing smile that turns heads, captures hearts—that's an invitation to romance!

For that kind of a smile you need bright, sparkling teeth that you are proud to show. But remember, sparkling teeth depend largely on *firm, healthy gums.*

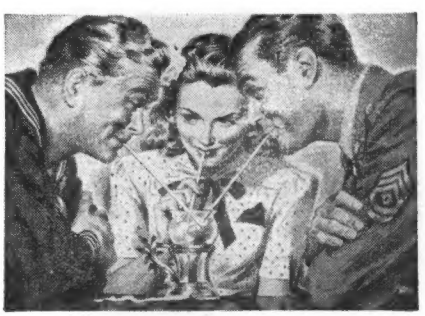
Don't ignore "Pink Tooth Brush"

If there's ever a tinge of "pink" on your tooth brush, *see your dentist!* He may say your gums have become tender and sensitive, robbed of exercise by creamy foods. And, like many dentists, he may suggest "the helpful stimulation of Ipana and massage."

For Ipana not only cleans your teeth but, with massage, it is designed to help the health of your gums.

Massage a little extra Ipana onto your gums every time you clean your teeth. Circulation increases in the gums, helps them to new firmness.

Let Ipana and massage help keep your teeth brighter, your gums firmer, your smile more sparkling and attractive.



A hit attraction—that's the girl with a sparkling smile! Let Ipana and massage help keep your smile lovely!

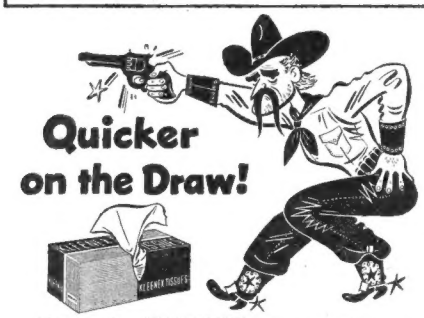
Start today with

Product of Bristol-Myers

IPANA and MASSAGE

But **KLEENEX*TISSUES** help keep me on the job! I use them during colds and say goodbye to sore nose misery! *(from a letter by* P. S., Thomaston, Ga.)

PROTECT THE OTHERS! **KLEENEX** HELPS CHECK SPREAD OF COLDS. USE A TISSUE ONCE—THEN DESTROY, GERMS AND ALL!



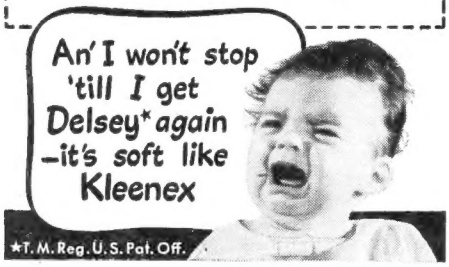
With the **KLEENEX** Serv-a-Tissue Box you pull a tissue and up pops another—not a handful as with ordinary boxes. Saves tissues-saves money! *(from letter by* B. W., Galveston, Tex.)

TELL ME ANOTHER SAYS **Kleenex**

AND WIN A $25 WAR BOND for each statement we publish on why you like Kleenex Tissues better than any other brand. Address: Kleenex, 919 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, 11, Illinois

TEST FOR TISSUES!

HOLD ***KLEENEX*** UP TO A LIGHT—YOU WON'T FIND HOLES OR WEAK SPOTS! REGARDLESS OF WHAT OTHERS DO, WE ARE DETERMINED TO MAINTAIN ***KLEENEX QUALITY*** IN EVERY PARTICULAR!



W. H. FAWCETT, Jr., President
PAULINE REAVES, Editor

WILLIAM C. LENGEL, Executive Editor
MARJORIE KUHBACH, Associate Editor

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LARGEST NEWSSTAND SALE OF ANY TEN CENT WOMAN'S MAGAZINE

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MEMBER AUDIT BUREAU OF CIRCULATIONS

Names of real persons or actual business firms are never used in the stories in this magazine, except in these stories accompanied by the author's name. If the names of actual persons appear, it is a matter of coincidenal.

DURA-GLOSS NAIL POLISH

Cuticle Lotion
Polish Remover
Dura-Coat

War workers cheer the extra freedom

WITH TAMPAX

NO BELTS
NO PINS
NO PADS
NO ODOR

Things move fast in war time. Changes that might take years now happen in weeks... Jammed buses, overtime hours, crowded rest-rooms—and great numbers of these slack-wearing girls find Tampax practically a necessity... For Tampax is sanitary protection that you wear *internally*. No bulging or bunching under the slacks, and you can change it "quick as a wink!" No belts, pins or pads. And wonder of wonders, no odor!

Tampax was perfected by a doctor for smart, modern women, for dainty sensitive women, for war workers, nurses, housewives, office girls, college girls—for active mothers and daughters... Easy disposal; no sanitary deodorant needed. Made of pure surgical cotton, it comes in neat patented applicator, so your hands need never touch the Tampax.

Remember the 3 sizes, especially the Super, which has about 50% extra absorbency. At drug stores or notion counters. Introductory box, 20¢. Bargain economy package lasts 4 months' average. Don't wait till *next* month! Tampax Incorporated, Palmer, Mass.

3 Absorbencies
REGULAR
SUPER JUNIOR

Guaranteed by Good Housekeeping

Accepted for Advertising by the Journal of the American Medical Association.

FORGET YOU'RE A

—U. S. Steel Photo

When you are treated on the same basis as a man, you are receiving the most honest of male compliments!

ELLEN was having man trouble that had nothing to do with romance.

It was Swenson, foreman of the power-stamping department in the war plant where Ellen worked, who had roused her ire. She had been working at a drill press that afternoon when Swenson had descended upon her grimly.

"Get those goggles down!" he growled. "Don't you know the rules? You wanna lose an eye? One sliver of flying metal and your beautiful brown lamp is gone, like that!" He snapped his fingers.

Ellen was so startled that for a moment she could only stare dumbly. Then her hand flew up to her forehead where she had thoughtlessly parked her goggles. Twin spots of red flamed in her cheeks. She pulled the goggles down over her eyes with a vicious jerk, spun on her heel and was suddenly very busy with her work.

"No man ever dared talk to me that way before," she complained to her sister Ruth that evening. "Swenson's no gentleman. He doesn't know how to treat a lady, the old bear. I'll put turpentine in his coffee, or something."

Ruth, who has worked in a war plant since 1941, smiled tolerantly.

"After all, you *were* breaking the rules, weren't you?" she asked.

"Well—yes. But he needn't have been such an old dragon about it."

"I know," said Ruth. "I used to feel that way, too. They could have sent me to the chair for some of the things I thought about Salski when he was giving me welding lessons. He didn't respond to my charm at all. One afternoon I had my eyes opened. I overheard Salski give a man a terrific dressing-down for spoiling a batch of aluminum plates. But ten minutes later Salski and this same man were laughing like kids over some joke one of them had told."

"You mean I should crack jokes with Swenson?" Ellen asked stiffly.

WOMAN—on the Job!

"Heavens, no! I mean, this fellow took his bawling-out as something he had coming to him, not as a personal insult. Now, me—I probably would have blown up in Salski's face and that's dumb! I began to wonder if I was expecting special consideration on the job just because I was a woman—you know, a sort of holdover notion that men should open doors for me, carry my schoolbooks, and all that.

"The idea made me mad. I was a woman doing a man's work, and I made up my mind *I'd take it like a man.* I wasn't going to expect any special favors just because of my sex. After that I got along swell."

WOMEN *are* doing men's work, so magnificently that they have turned the tide of production overwhelmingly against the Axis. There is not room to tell the whole thrilling story of woman-forged sinews of victory, but in some airplane plants half the workers are women; even in shipyards, one-third of the jobs can be handled by womanpower; and in such plants as machine tool factories—heavy manufacturing that you would think requires *man*power if anything does—only about 10% of the jobs are such that men alone must fill them.

Working side by side with men, women are learning things about male psychology that they could never observe in sheltered social and domestic contacts. What is more, men, too, are learning about women from them. Men and women are not on dress parade when they work together at a common task. They come to understand each other as human beings rather than as representatives of an opposite and mysterious sex. They tend less and less to use such belittling phrases as "isn't that just like a man" and "what can you expect of a woman?"

Some women, accustomed to male punctilio in such matters as rising when a woman enters the room, jumping to light their cigarettes, and the like, are surprised to find that not all men at work are Sir Walter Raleighs. Why should they be? It is not that chivalry is dead or that real courtesy is out of place in a factory. You will find plenty of both. It is merely that minor niceties and considerations are out of place in a humming war plant if they interfere with production.

It is more difficult for some girls to adopt the philosophy of "work for work's sake" because, as a general rule, women are more personal in their reactions, more pronounced individualists, than men. Like Ellen, they are likely to bristle when receiving brusque commands or reproofs because they [*Please turn to page* 10]

Quick Trick for Charm—this half minute with Mum!

Don't risk underarm odor! Use Mum every day. It's speedy, safe, sure!

A GIRL may have beauty and brains—she may have a sparkling personality and pretty clothes. But who will stay around to admire if underarm odor tells that she's careless about daintiness!

No one excuses this fault. Even with a daily bath you can't be *sure*—baths only remove *past* perspiration. To prevent risk of *future* underarm odor it's a very wise precaution to make Mum a daily habit!

Mum is so dependable! Summer or winter, Mum works! It prevents underarm odor without stopping perspiration, irritating the skin, or harming clothes!

Every busy day, every social evening, give half a minute to Mum. Stay appealing, dainty—a girl it's nice to date! Ask your druggist for Mum today!

• • •

For Sanitary Napkins *you need a safe, gentle, dependable deodorant. Use Mum!*

It's good business to be always nice to have around! So start every day right—with Mum. Mum's so quick, convenient—grand when you're in a hurry!

Don't gamble with friendships—don't risk underarm odor! Mum is *sure*—without stopping perspiration it prevents odor for a whole day or evening!

A product of Bristol-Myers

MUM TAKES THE ODOR OUT OF PERSPIRATION

Stay Popular through the evening ahead! No underarm odor worries when your charm is protected by Mum. Use Mum before dates—and happy romancing!

WOMEN WHO KNOW

have a better chance for happiness!

IMPROVED NEW FEMININE HYGIENE WAY
gives continuous action for hours!

● Knowing the truth about feminine hygiene—the real modern facts—is bound to mean greater happiness for any wife! Are you sure your information is up-to-date?

Today you can know! Today no woman need trust half-truths. No woman need rely on weak, ineffective home-made mixtures—or risk using over-strong solutions of acids, which can burn and injure delicate tissues.

Intelligent, well-informed women everywhere rely on Zonitors, the new safe convenient feminine hygiene way!

Zonitors are dainty, snow-white suppositories! Non-greasy. They spread a protective coating and kill germs instantly at contact. Deodorize, by actually *destroying* odor, instead of temporarily "masking" it. *Give continuous action for hours!*

Powerful, yet so safe for delicate tissues! Non-poisonous, non-burning. Zonitors help promote gentle healing. No apparatus; nothing to mix. At all druggists.

FREE: Mail this coupon for revealing booklet of intimate facts, sent postpaid in plain envelope. Zonitors, Dept. 7903E, 370 Lexington Avenue, New York, N.Y.

Name.....

Address.....

City.....*State*.....

Zonitors
~ SO CONVENIENT

The Girl on the Cover

WIPS FOR WINNING THE WAR

THE girl on our cover this month is a member of the WIPS. With the WAACs, WAVES, SPARS she has earned the right to wear a uniform as a symbol of the service she is giving her country.

You too can wear the WIPS uniform, provided you are a woman who has been employed in an occupation essential to the war effort for 60 days or more.

There is no enlistment period, no military training and you don't have to leave home to join.

Who are the WIPS? What is their job? The letters stand for WOMEN'S INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION SERVICE.

The job of the WIPS is to *do the job* on the home front. The uniform they wear advertises they are war workers, and proud of it. It advertises, too, that they DO THEIR JOB SAFELY AND WELL.

Did you know that more than four times as many lives have been lost in factory accidents since Pearl Harbor as have been lost on the battle front?

In this same period, carelessness in industry has maimed more than ten times the number listed as wounded in our armed forces.

This is the situation the WIPS are fighting, and it is to the proposition of more safety and service in industry that the organization is dedicated.

The WIPS was started by a group of girl workers in war plants, under the direction of Carol Shaughnessy, an employee of the W. L. Maxson Company, New York, the girl on page 19.

Miss Shaughnessy's uniform is not designed to be worn on the job, but for street wear. It is a smart three-piece outfit, consisting of a dark tan skirt, khaki jacket and becoming khaki visored cap. No girl need wear or acquire the uniform to be a member of the WIPS. The insignia, visible on the arm of the girl who posed for our cover picture this month is suitable for wear on a work uniform, sweater or blouse, as well as on the street uniform. The insignia is a replica of a gear wheel and a pair of silver wings which bear the motto: Safety—Service.

In fact, joining the WIPS costs you *absolutely nothing* and doesn't interfere with membership in any other women's organization. The organization is devoted entirely to women war workers, it requires only that you pledge to do your job as efficiently and carefully as you can, and help your fellow workers do the same.

Because your editor feels that the WIPS and what it stands for can be a contribution to the war effort, we have volunteered to act as a clearing-house for your questions about the organization and how to join it.

Simply fill out the coupon below and mail it to us in a letter or on a postcard.

We will forward to Miss Shaughnessy who will send you complete details on how to become a charter member in your locality.

Remember the WIPS is a voluntary organization—of women, by women, and for you!

SEND TO EDITOR, TRUE CONFESSIONS, 1501 BROADWAY, NEW YORK 18, N. Y.

Please send me complete information on the WIPS, including the application blank for membership. It is my understanding there are no dues or other obligations. I am listing below the name and address of my employer as indication that I am employed in an industry rated as necessary to the war effort.

Name (Please Print) .....Date.....

Home Address .....
Street City

Employed by .....

.....
Address

Confidentially—

A GREAT many of our boys from the office come back on furlough and their one comment to us is always the same—"Why don't you people write us more often?" At this point a lot of us feel ashamed. No doubt a lot of you feel the same way with those that you love who are in the service. After whirling through a day's activities we sit down in the evening and somehow can't think of a thing to write.

Did you ever stop to think how the slightest triviality may be of interest to those who are many miles from home? Remember how you almost broke your back last Saturday pulling weeds out of the victory garden. John, or Joe, would probably get a good laugh out of that one. Then think what a picture he'll have in his mind as you write him about climbing up on a chair and trying to replace the fuse you accidentally blew out the other night!

When writing our boys there's always one thing we've got to be careful of—and that is not to tell them we can't go on without them and every minute of the day we miss them. There's no sense in upsetting our boys emotionally, but just give them enough to hold on to, something concrete.

Most important of all, let's keep those letters going to our boys. There's no limit to the number of letters you should send them—but at least one a day and if you can possibly find time, write more. Since our boys don't get home very often, why not have some informal shots taken with that little box camera and send them on? I, for one, always get a nice feeling when folks I know send pictures and I'll bet those fellows in the army do, too. So what do you say that we all join together in the new campaign to let no service man turn away from mail call —empty handed.

Have you read the story about the WIPS on page 8? Here's a genuine opportunity to join a worth-while organization. I'm sure you'll be interested in it.

Remember the October issue of TRUE CONFESSIONS goes on sale September 10th.

I'll be looking for you next month,

The Editor

"For a Skin to stir Male Hearts try my *W.B.N.C."

RITA HAYWORTH, STARRING IN "THE COVER GIRL," A COLUMBIA PICTURE

Says Rita Hayworth:

"So many of us in Hollywood go through the same beauty routine every night that we have a nickname for it. W.B.N.C. is short for . . .

***Woodbury Beauty Night Cap."**

First, cleanse with Woodbury Cold Cream—wipe the soiled cream away. Then pat on more—and wipe again, leaving a trace of the rich oils all night.

As you smooth on Woodbury Cold Cream, its 4 special ingredients start their beauty action—giving luscious new softness, smoothness. And an exclusive ingredient acts constantly to purify the cream in the jar, helping guard against blemish-causing germs from dust, soiled fingers.

Tonight take the W.B.N.C.—you'll do some pulse-stirring tomorrow. Big economy jars of Woodbury Cold Cream, $1.25, 75¢. Also 50¢, 25¢, 10¢ sizes.

WOODBURY COLD CREAM

The Complete Beauty Cream

Forget You're a Woman on the Job

[CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7]

interpret them as personal challenges.

Most men, during their working lives, are forced to develop an objective attitude, a thick skin off which one's inevitable vexations, reproofs and boners bounce without leaving permanent scars. They are disciplined to take orders because otherwise they cannot give them. It should help their working adjustment for women to remember that in being treated on more or less the same basis as men, by the management, they are receiving the most honest of male compliments—that of equality.

Certainly it is the height of folly for a woman worker to use sex as a weapon. Not just outrageous flirting or extremes in dress, but the expectation that feminine helplessness is entitled to special consideration. Nobody—certainly no plant manager—believes any longer in the old myth of "helpless womanhood."

THERE is the case of Marian, a really talented girl who wonders why she is still a tracer in the drafting department while other girls, no more skilled than she, have been promoted to do original drawings.

She would be amazed and hurt to know the reason. It was necessary for her department head to point out slight errors on her tracings and order them done over. He was tactful, as he thought, but crisply to the point.

"But that teeny little slip—" Marian began in a hurt tone.

"There's no such thing as a *little* slip on a tracing. Either it's right or it isn't, and this one isn't."

Marian's eyes filled and her lips trembled. The manager felt as if he had kicked a puppy. He was acutely uncomfortable, for Marian's attitude plainly indicated that he had been bullying a sensitive woman. After two or three such experiences, he sidestepped the problem by assigning Marian to less important work.

FORTUNATELY, the Marians in industry are rare. Once it may have been something of a lark to "go in for war work." Now it is serious business and women are buckling down to it in grim earnest.

Indeed, some workers are so conscientious that they overlook the vital art of relaxation. It isn't unpatriotic to have a good time! A monotonous routine of work, sleep, work, sleep, eventually blunts the edge of efficiency. Most big war plants now allow frequent rest periods, provide music during the lunch hour, encourage distribution of food snacks during mid-morning and mid-afternoon periods to combat fatigue, and similar measures. It's good for production! Morale is just as vital in the factory as on the battlefront.

Men workers have new adjustments to make too. If women will be good-humored about occasional resentments they may encounter, remembering that their working competence has knocked a lot of long-cherished masculine "superiorities" into the discard, adjustment will be easier.

After all, few men are made happy by realizing that women can do their work as well (often better) than they can. A man may unconsciously fear that a woman can work for lower wages and may become a threat to his security. Without calling it that, he may be jealous. His acceptance of women in his plant may range from good-natured tolerance to outright resentment.

Well, women have had centuries of experience in managing men without seeming to do so. They will find that methods which work with husbands and sweethearts are just as effective in the factory.

A little bit of the "great, big wonderful man" attitude goes a long way—if it isn't overdone. Careful attention to instructions, intelligent questions, requests for aid or advice on a ticklish job—all these things are subtly calculated to swell the chest of the dominant male and make him a violent defender of women in industry. Another surefire method of winning male admiration is to achieve real competence on the job, for men instinctively respect efficiency, just as they detest flightiness, temperament and tears.

It is not universally true that women are paid equal wages for equal work, but sex differences in wages are being swiftly obliterated. Most airplane plants have established the same beginning wages for men and women. The Army and Navy require wage equality, and the great majority of labor unions are insisting on "equal pay for equal work" in negotiating new contracts.

In fact, even now the old distinctions

between men's work and women's work are being wiped out. In many industrial operations women are not the equals of men—they are definitely superior! They are infinitely more patient than men. Their fingers are nimble, dexterous, swift as lightning, where man's stronger hands tend toward clumsiness. About the only jobs women cannot tackle are those involving heavy lifting, but in this age of machines there are fewer and fewer of these jobs even for men.

The old fiction that women are "machine shy" dies hard. Too many women feel needlessly inferior in the presence of complex machines. Once they understand them, however, they often leave men flat-footed. More and more gigantic machines are now controlled by finger operations requiring deftness, co-ordination, rather than brute strength. In steel mills, women are at the controls of monstrous overhead cranes; they run drill presses, turret lathes, welding equipment, and dozens of other mechanisms in a way to make men look to their laurels.

THE girl who says, "I hate to work for a woman," may find to her surprise that war work requires her to do just that. Then she has the problem of getting along with her own sex—in some ways more difficult than managing men. Women tend to regard other members of their sex, especially if they are young and attractive, as potential rivals, a sort of holdover from ancient days of the race. Psychologists explain that an unconscious wish for male dominance makes it seem more "natural" for a woman to take orders from a man. Be that as it may, many girls definitely do not prefer women bosses.

Yet when the job rather than personalities is kept in mind, this ancient feminine prejudice becomes unimportant. It helps a girl over rough spots if she bears in mind that doing a consistently good job will some day enable *her* to give the orders. In many factories women hold responsible executive jobs.

There are upwards of 3,000,000 women now employed in war industry, and another million and a half are needed this

PROBLEM STORY WINNERS

In the July issue of TRUE CONFESSIONS Mrs. Catherine H. asks whether she has the right to sacrifice half a million dollars for love. The three prize winners who feel that she deserves some happiness and should marry Ham are:

FIRST PRIZE, $25
Mrs. G. K., Hartford, Conn.

SECOND PRIZE, $10
Mrs. R. D. H., Cedar City, Utah

THIRD PRIZE, $5
Mrs. K. R., Reynoldsville, Pa.

Get the story from Frances...

Here's what she means when she gurgles:

"I know where mother keeps my Johnson's Baby Powder and Johnson's Baby Oil! When I get a little bigger, I'll climb up and get 'em *myself!*

"When mother sprinkles me with Johnson's Baby Powder, I think, *this* is the ticket! Cool ... and soft ... and my, it makes me smell pretty!

"Other times, mother smooths me with nice, gentle Johnson's Oil. Makes me feel so good I forget to wiggle!

"Why doesn't mother leave 'em where I can *reach?*"

Then hear it from Frances' trained-nurse mother...

Pretty, blue-eyed Mrs. Walter Mullane, of Plainfield, N. J., is a trained nurse. She says:

"My hospital experience guided me in choosing both Johnson's Baby Powder and Johnson's Baby Oil for Frances.

"Take Johnson's Baby Powder—and isn't it soft and silky! That's my stand-by for diaper rashes . . . and to help keep Frances free from prickly heat.

"As for Johnson's Baby Oil —it's all a baby oil *should* be . . . bland and pure. I gave Frances oil baths with it when she was tiny—and still use it, for scalp and skin dryness.

"And if I sound enthusiastic —well, I *am!*"

...you'll know why nurses use Johnson's Baby Powder and Johnson's Baby Oil on their own Babies

Johnson & Johnson
NEW BRUNSWICK, N. J. CHICAGO, ILL.

BEAUTY HELP FOR "HOME FRONT" HANDS!

TOUSHAY

***Beforehand* lotion guards hands even in hot, soapy water**

Lots of extra little soap-and-water chores nowadays! So guard soft, lovely hands with Toushay! Smooth on this creamy "beforehand" lotion *before* you put your hands into hot, soapy water. Toushay's made to a special formula—helps *prevent* dryness and roughness—helps keep busy hands soft. Inexpensive. At your druggist's.

Trade-marked Product of Bristol-Myers

year to "man" desperately understaffed plants. Thousands of men will be leaving the factories soon for the Army and Navy, and it is women who must replace them.

The incentives certainly are great. Fabulous tales of $100 a week wages for women without special skills need a good deal of discounting, but the more probable levels of $35 to $40 a week are still well above most white-collar jobs. Moreover, many factories pay women while they are learning skills to fit them for higher-paying positions.

It is easy to find a war job. In most communities there is a branch of the U. S. Employment Service, charging no fees. Women give their job histories and backgrounds to a sympathetic official. He may place the applicant directly in a factory, if she needs no special training or if such training is provided at the plant, or he may enroll her in a quick refresher course in a free vocational school. In either event, she is prepared to take her place as a soldier in the front-line battle of production. About three-fourths of the new workers hired, get their training right on the job, so experience is by no means essential.

Women with some education can prepare for jobs requiring more technical training by enrolling in the Engineering, Science, and Management War Training Program. This government division offers courses in upwards of 200 colleges to prepare both men and women for positions as scientific aides, chemists, engineers, technical assistants, draftsmen, etc. Women fortunate enough to have a liking for science and mathematics will find dozens of superior jobs clamoring for their services.

WHAT about romance—the effect of war work on personality, family life, marriage?

One is tempted to answer, "all to the good." Sociologists for years have been pointing out that women in such occupations as schoolteaching, library work, and similar white-collar professions are less likely to marry if only because their work brings them into contact with few eligible men. One of the most effective of matrimonial bureaus is the co-educational college where romances flourish among young men and women working and studying together. In this respect factories are co-educational too, emphasizing teamwork and common interests.

Many women will continue their careers after the war, but thousands of others will marry and establish homes of their own.

Small chance that the woman who was once a war worker will drive her husband to distraction by entangling his checking account, mismanaging the house; or waste his energies in exhausting ways. She's no clinging vine, unable to tell the working end of a screwdriver!

Self-reliant, competent, and every whit as feminine as her sheltered sister, she will have an added knowledge of male psychology that is not acquired through courtship alone. When John comes home from a hard day's work and flops down on the sofa with the complaint that he is all fagged out, she will know he is telling the truth, and may even refrain from asking him to take her on a tour of the night clubs! Because when women work with men, they know what an honest day's work does and certainly they should be more sympathetic and understanding in the future.

BULLETIN FROM WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF TRUE CONFESSIONS
1314 MASSACHUSETTS AVE.
WASHINGTON, D. C.

To W. H. Fawcett, Jr., President
True Confessions
New York City

Here is the bright side of the food picture:

EUROPE'S pea-pod soup and potato peel stew aren't on the menu for Americans this winter despite the gloomy crop reports. Neither is a starchy diet of bread and potatoes that would make us stout, but frail.

Alice Nichols, manager of the Food Conservation Campaign, assures me that Americans will remain the best fed people on earth despite the fact that we'll all have to learn to be more frugal.

The food reports show that there will be plenty of healthy, whole-grain bread and cereals, although butter may be difficult to get. Meat will remain scarce, but there will be about two pounds a week on the average for everybody--including what is eaten in restaurants. Peanut butter will be more plentiful and is a healthy protein supplement for meats.

There will be more eggs than ever before but there's still a possibility they may be rationed by winter.

Fruits will be scarce because of the damage to orchards.

* * *

THIS TIP may be worth $150 to servicemen's wives.

Congress has appropriated money to pay for maternity and infant care for wives of men in the services.

Almost every state is now participating in this program.

this is a real help

Here is the way it works: If you are pregnant and your husband is in the armed forces and is not a commissioned officer, ask your doctor or your clinic how you can apply for Emergency Maternity and Infant Care. If you are close to labor, ask the hospital.

If you are eligible, your doctor bills for medical care before and after pregnancy, including delivery, and for the baby during his or her first year will be sent to the State Health Department which will pay those bills out of Federal funds.

This Government aid is worth between $90 and $150 in usual doctor bills.

(over)

WILL ROGERS, the young Congressman from Hollywood, has a few facts that every American ought to know about taxes and high prices. Here they are:

It's up to all of us to cooperate

The new method of deducting taxes from wages or salaries is the best guarantee against inflation yet devised.

These taxes take extra dollars out of pocketbooks at a time when there is little to buy. These dollars are taken out of competition with others and put where they can't bid up prices.

It is impossible to keep prices down without boosting taxes.

But, having accepted the new taxes, every citizen has a right to insist that the Congress hit the other side of the line against inflation, that a real lid be put on prices through stricter enforcement of price ceilings and stricter control of rents.

If prices are going up in the stores where you shop, write your Congressman or make a formal complaint to your Price and Rationing Board. Don't be afraid to speak up against high prices. This is a democracy and the President can't win the fight against inflation alone.

* * *

DONALD NELSON has asked me to remind readers that the scrap campaigns still need everyone's support.

Here are Nelson's suggestions:

Waste fats--Use them for cooking at home in place of rationed supplies or take them to your butcher. Don't use fats to make soap. When you make soap at home you can't extract the glycerine and it is the glycerine that is so desperately needed to make bombs.

Steel--Farm machinery, boilers, old furnaces and other heavy scrap are needed now rather than light household items.

Copper, brass and bronze are always needed.

Tin cans, rope, rags, bones and light bulbs should be turned in only if your local salvage committee is asking for them.

* * *

HAROLD ICKES, who is running both coal and oil programs for the President, says he won't be responsible for any household that doesn't fill its coal bin or oil storage tank this month.

Next winter probably will be harder and colder than last. It is going to be harder to get coal delivered. Oil is going to be scarcer.

Old Icks advice on coal is to take what you can get, when you can get it and don't be too fussy about the size.

* * *

DON'T FORGET--the Army still needs women.

G. C.

A Poetry Lover's Corner

TO MY WIFE

When I am wrong, and you are right
And sweetly, far into the night
You build up mountains of reproach
From various angles of approach,
Changing the picture, bit by bit,
Although, my darling, I admit
Your versatility is nice,
One version really would suffice!

—MAY RICHSTONE

DAME NATURE

Nature cannot be a woman,
Would a woman wear
Each recurring spring the same
Roses in her hair?

Always wear for ornament
Dewdrops round her throat?
And, eternally in winter,
The same old ermine coat?

—GERTRUDE HAHN

DREAMS, BUT GOOD!

She knew what was coming; she noticed the glow
That lit up his eyes and enlivened him, so,
She listened politely for ever so long
To what was his usual dream-laden song
Of things he would do when the future was here—
The elegant jewels he'd buy her to wear,
The sables and minks, and the gowns made of lace
(With loads of silk stockings all over the place),
The mansion he'd mold out of starlight and laughter
And all of the miracles after . . . and after . . .

And when he was done she was forced to admit
She'd really not minded it one little bit!

—S. H. DEWHURST

NOSTALGIA

I'm weary of grim city walls,
Steel ramparts, stone, concrete,
Of din, and glare, and raucous calls,
And rush of trampling feet.

My soul is sick for shady lanes,
For woods, and lakes, and streams,
For starlit nights and soft fresh rains,
For you—and our lost dreams!

Oh, take me back to scenes so dear,
So bright, ere love had gone.
Perchance I'll rest, if I may hear
The robins sing at dawn!

—MINNETTE LAKE WARREN

I'll stay *Fragrantly Dainty* all evening...thanks to my "30 second" secret

Do you ever forget that simple, unsuspected body staleness can be the real cause of a wrecked romance? Once I forgot, and it brought me heartbreak! But then I discovered a lucky secret...and now in just 30 seconds I can always make sure I'll stay fragrantly dainty all evening! And here's how...

"FIRST, after my bath, I dry myself *gently*...just barely *patting* those easily irritated "danger zones" that might chafe!

"THEN, I caress my whole body with Cashmere Bouquet Talcum! From top to toe, its soothing coolness cascades over my skin with a silky-smoothness. Quickly, the tiny traces of moisture I missed are absorbed. And there I stand, delicately perfumed all over...knowing now why they call it—*the fragrance men love!*

"AH, AND NOW, how luxurious I feel...no chafing or binding, now or later! I'm confident and at ease, for I know that Cashmere Bouquet's smooth protection will last the whole evening through—and so will the fragrance men love!"

Make Cashmere Bouquet Talcum *your* secret of daintiness! Discover for yourself its long-clinging softness and alluring fragrance...all the superb qualities that have made Cashmere Bouquet the largest selling talcum in America! You'll find it in 10¢ and larger sizes at all leading toilet goods counters.

Cashmere Bouquet

THE TALC WITH THE FRAGRANCE MEN LOVE

A Charming Subject

A daily bath for daintiness, says this charming subject.

CHARM is a matter of many things—poise, personality, appearance. Whichever you consider most important, personal daintiness is the one which must head every list. Without it there can be no charm.

An all-over sudsing is the very first step of charm insurance. Thank your lucky stars for the many mild, quick-lathering toilet soaps available. But remember, waste is not tolerated in a country at war. Use what you need for a thorough clean-up, but don't let the cake melt away when it's serving no good purpose.

You'll get lather more quickly if you pour water softener in the tub while the water is running. Soapsuds will rinse off more easily, too. Especially recommended in hard water areas.

The sketches show other vital steps in every fastidious woman's daily program—and that means you.

Keep hair free from dirt and grime with a weekly shampoo. Make it a real beauty treatment, two good latherings and two equally thorough rinsings. Between shampoos, hair can be kept fresh and lustrous looking through vigorous daily brushings.

Get the eye lotion habit—a drop in each eye, morning and night for clear and clean sparklers. Check up on your vision. If you need glasses, wear them by all means.

A pretty smile, revealing well-cared for teeth is a charming asset. Don't wait for a toothache to visit the dentist. Let him give your teeth a complete going-over a couple times a year. Your twice-a-day brushing should be done up and down, not across. Be sure your toothbrush stock contains a minimum of two for regular use—one for morning, one for night.

1

2

3

1. Clean hair for charm. Between weekly shampoos, remove dust with daily brushings.

2. Clean teeth for charm. They must be brushed at least twice a day with good dentifrice.

3. Clean eyes for charm. Drop in eye lotion to keep them clear, help prevent eyestrain.

YOUR GUIDE TO BEAUTY

MARY BAILEY, DIRECTOR

Girls who serve in Navy blue
Have shining, lovely tresses too!

No other shampoo leaves hair so lustrous...and yet so easy to manage!*

PRETTY SMOOTH . . . and mighty smart! A wonderful hair-do for the girl to whom short hair is becoming. It gives you that alert, alive look you want these days—in or out of uniform! Hair shampooed with Special Drene—for extra sheen and smoothness!

Only Special Drene reveals up to 33% more lustre than soap, yet leaves hair so easy to arrange, so alluringly smooth!

Whether you're wearing a uniform or not—shining hair is standard equipment for the loveliness every girl wants!

So don't dull the lustre of your hair by using soap or soap shampoos!

INSTEAD, USE SPECIAL DRENE! See the dramatic difference after your first shampoo . . . how gloriously it reveals all the lovely sparkling highlights, all the natural color brilliance of your hair!

And now that Special Drene contains a wonderful hair conditioner, it leaves hair far silkier, smoother and easier to arrange . . . right after shampooing!

EASIER TO COMB into smooth, shining neatness! If you haven't tried Drene lately, you'll be amazed!

And remember, Special Drene gets rid of all flaky dandruff the very first time you use it.

So for more alluring hair, insist on Special Drene with Hair Conditioner added. Or ask your beauty shop to use it!

*PROCTER & GAMBLE, after careful tests of all types of shampoos, found no other which leaves hair so lustrous and yet so easy to manage as Special Drene.

REPLACEMENT OR REFUND OF MONEY
Guaranteed by Good Housekeeping
IF DEFECTIVE OR NOT AS ADVERTISED THEREIN

Soap film dulls lustre—robs hair of glamour!

Avoid this beauty handicap! Switch to Special Drene. It never leaves any dulling film, as all soaps and soap shampoos do.

That's why Special Drene reveals up to 33% more lustre!

Special Drene with *Hair Conditioner*

IN THE HEADLINES . . . .

THE watchword in a nation at war is conservation. Hardly a day goes by without pleas to care for what we have, to get the most out of what we buy, to stretch our rations. I know each and every one of you is practicing conservation. You all realize this is the patriotic thing to do. How many of you, I wonder, have thought of conservation in connection with your beauty products? If you haven't, now's the time to start. You'll find here many ideas on specific ways and means of conserving your beloved aids to loveliness.

Recently many miles of sidewalk were examined which showed that on the average city block you will find ten or a dozen bob pins scattered about. That's waste with a capital W. One way to prevent it is by using the right size. If your hair is short, too large bob pins will fall out. Pins that are too small won't hold long heavy hair and will pop off.

Hairpins and bob pins are still being made. You can get the same fine quality you're used to. But the quantity isn't as great; as in every other civilian industry, production has been curtailed. Don't strew these precious grooming essentials around. Keep them in a special box when they're not in use. Take care not to ruin the spring by bending them into unnatural shapes. If you use them in water or waveset, dry them thoroughly afterwards.

Put caps back on bottles . . . and put them back tightly. Don't take a chance on waste through spillage. The firmer the bottle closing, the less evaporation of the contents. Other tips on bottled preparations: Drain nail polish brush against neck of the bottle to guard against waste. Conserve polish remover by saturating cotton and pressing on nail for several minutes. Do this with each nail before beginning the actual removing and you should find three dips in the remover enough for the whole job. Keep perfume in the dark if possible; sunlight causes evaporation.

What do you do with that last bit of lipstick in the case, way down at the bottom where it's not easy to use? This is what I do. I dig it out of the case with an orangewood stick, put it in a small jar. I've been saving dabs of lipstick that way for many months. Now I have quite a supply which I keep for home use and apply with a lip brush. Metal cases were donated to the scrap drive—all but a couple of my favorites for which I bought refills. Try it yourself. It works beautifully.

If your pet brands of face cream, powder, etc., are to be had in more than one size, it's smart to buy the largest. You'll get more for your money . . . and economy and conservation go hand in hand. Whip up your cream and stir up your powder with a spatula or spoon to make it go farther. Never leave tops off jars or boxes.

Take care of your equipment. Metal is scarce; better cherish your manicure scissors and nippers. Have a special box for them; don't get them wet. An occasional drop or two of oil on joinings will keep them in good working condition. Protect points by wraping cotton around them.

Your hair brush will work better, last longer if it's kept free from dust. When in use, wipe bristles with cleansing tissues after every few strokes. Wash and air your brush frequently (and this goes for tooth and nail brushes as well).

Bear this in mind: There are enough beauty preparations to go around and it's pretty certain there will be for the duration. Don't hoard; you'll only keep others from getting what they need. Both hoarding and wasting will help Hitler and Hirohito—not you! Give plenty of thought to your purchases and let your beauty motto be: I'll buy only what I need, I'll use enough to do the job and no more, I'll take excellent care of what I have.

YOUR GUIDE TO BEAUTY

MARY BAILEY, DIRECTOR

Pepsi-Cola Company, Long Island City, New York. Bottled locally by Franchised Bottlers from coast to coast.

SALVAGED "little things" HELP SAVE LIVES

TRUE CONFESSIONS SALUTES OUR WOMEN OF THE MONTH

The SPARS: "Always Ready"—they are releasing Coast Guardsmen for active duty. The WAACs: In America or on foreign soil, they are in the Army!

The WAVES: The Navy uses them to replace men wherever possible.
The MARINES: The Marines, too, release "Leather-necks" for active service.

The WIPS: Last, but not least, the girl in the middle, Carol Shaughnessy, National Commander, WIPS, represents the women on the defense front. See page 8 for more about the WIPS.

I DON'T know why women would rather buy a dress designed by Therese—and pay three times as much for it—as they would one made by plain Teresa O'Flaherty. But that's the way it is! It's one of those queer bits of feminine psychology that have amassed fortunes for the people clever enough to play upon it. And I was one of those people.

I was born in Texas. Terry O'Flaherty with red hair, a pug nose, freckles and green slanty eyes. My mouth was too wide and I was skinny to the point of painfulness. There's a lot of wealth in Texas and my father was always just on the verge of making money—only he never did. My mother and I followed him from one venture to another. If it was oil-wells they somehow gushed for everyone but him; if it was cattle there would be a drought to kill them off. We had a cotton plantation the year boll weevils destroyed the crop and we had a citrus fruit farm the year a hurricane came up from the South and laid bare the orchards. If we made money in one venture, we lost it in another.

I watched my mother grow old, work-worn and thin. The most important thing in the world was money, I thought. My father died when I was in the seventh grade of grammar school. There was nothing left, of course. If there had been an insurance policy he had probably used it up long ago on one of his wild schemes. We missed Dad. He had been such a gay, reckless, crazy Irishman, but I think my mother felt that we were no worse off than we had ever been—maybe a little bit better off—because we would stay in one place now and make the best of it.

She had always sewed for both of us and now she began sewing for others. At night I would have to help her although I loathed the work. I liked pretty materials. I liked draping them around me—but I hated basting and making seams and putting in hems.

Instinctively I knew what was becoming to people and what wasn't. That fat Mrs. Griffith, for instance, shouldn't wear that big-pattern silk and little dried-up Mrs. Tuttle needed some pretty collars and cuffs on those severe clothes she wore.

My mother sewed for the families of some of the wealthy oil men and ranchers, but after the girls had gone to college and finishing school they usually insisted on going to one of the big cities to buy their clothes in the exclusive stores that carried dresses with labels on them.

My mother explained to me about labels. She told me about the French dressmakers and designers and the fashionable shops in New York where a dress was called an exclusive model. Years ago, before I was born and when my father was having a lucky streak, he had taken his young bride to New York and lavished upon her all the luxuries of the city.

I said unhappily: "I wish I could marry someone wealthy who would buy me beautiful things. But I guess I'll never have a husband. I'm awfully ugly."

"You're not ugly at all," Mother said gently. "But why not grow up so intelligent and smart that you can make money enough to buy yourself beautiful things."

"Yes, guess I'd better plan on doing that," I said with all the gravity of thirteen, as I stared at myself thoughtfully in my mother's cracked mirror. No matter what my mother said I certainly wasn't pretty.

None of the little boys in my class at school ever looked at me like they did at Sally Wainstock, who had long golden curls and china blue eyes; or at Dolores Rios, whose long black braids and big black eyes and softly flushed olive cheeks enabled her to get her books carried home every night. The only attention the boys ever gave me was to shout derisively: "Yah, Red!" and chase me when I stuck my tongue out at them.

But I was smarter than the boys who chased me. I was smarter than Sally Wainstock or Dolores Rios. My report card was usually all A's. I was smart in other things, too. Languages were always a cinch for me. In our wanderings when my father was alive, I had picked up Spanish and Mexican and could chatter them to the workmen like a native.

In the boarding house where we lived there was a little dark French woman whose husband ran a restaurant in the town. Madame Chevalier had lost her two children when she and her husband had first come to this country and she always had a bit of bright ribbon for my hair or a box of bon bons or a piece of French pastry in her room for me. I would sit there by the hour and talk to her like a little old woman.

My mother worked hard in those days, but she couldn't always make ends meet. She sewed early and late. Long after I had done my homework and was tucked in bed, she would sit under the one poor little light she had rigged up over her sewing machine, and the sight of her there and the whirring sound of her machine would be like a lullaby putting me to sleep.

"They pay me so little," Mother would say worriedly. "This same dress in the store would cost them many times as much, or if that French dressmaker in the new hotel made it. A lot of them go to her and pay enormous prices, yet I sew just as well. If I asked the same amounts they would laugh at me."

One day—right after my fourteenth birthday—my mother slumped in her chair in front of the sewing machine. She regained consciousness for a bit after the doctor came, but all she said when she opened her weary eyes was, "I—am—so—tired. So—very—tired." When she closed them again, it was the end. The doctor said she had had a heart attack brought on by worry and overwork.

I suppose they would have put me in an orphan asylum if it hadn't been for Madame Chevalier and her husband. She went to court and signed papers saying that she would care for me, and I clung to her gratefully in the midst of my bewildered sorrow.

The Chevaliers were wonderful to me. They dressed me, took care of all my wants and when I was sixteen and they were returning to France they took me with them. "You have taken the place of my own little girl and boy le bon Dieu saw fit to take from me," she often told me.

Those six months in France were thrilling to a sixteen-year-old kid like me. I went to a French school. I chattered French like a native. And then once again Death stepped into my life. Dear, kindly Papa Chevalier with his bristling black mustache and his dark gentle eyes, was laid at rest

I CLIMBED TO FAME

No one knew that behind her enameled smile and her blazing success that her heart was bleeding with a terrible, unrequited love.

Dave kissed me as only he could kiss. My kiss was full of my aching love for him.

ON PRETENSE

in the family's lot in a little cemetery near Paris. Only then did I know that he had come back to his own country to die.

"He had cancer trouble for many years," Mama Chevalier told me sadly. "Even when we went to America the doctors had told him it was but a question of time. He made much money in America and we were grateful and loved the land and the people but when a man or a woman knows that the end is near, they are irresistibly drawn back to the soil from which they sprung. So it was with Papa. And I fear I shall follow him. I have picked out a nice American school for you, Teresa, my child, and I am sending you back to your own country. That is best. If I should go, I would not want to feel that you were here among people not your own."

I cried and clung to her. I didn't want to leave her. But she could be firm as well as gentle.

Back in America I was miserable and unhappy. I hated the school to which Mama Chevalier sent me and I hated the teachers. The dark blue uniforms we wore emphasized my plainness and skinniness. The other girls had families, boy-friends, background. I had nothing.

When I ran away from the school I intended to go back to France, back to Mama Chevalier. I had money enough to get to New York. I went to a hotel there and cabled her, begging her to send me passage money so that I could return to her.

The answer came back from one of her relatives. Mama Chevalier was dead. There was no indication in the cable that she had left any provision for me. I didn't expect anything. I was more than grateful for everything she had done for me already.

Mr. Horman couldn't understand a word of French. He called in a French woman to translate my proposition. I even fooled her!

And now I was alone . . . and I knew that some way, somehow, I had to live. But what could I do? I answered a lot of ads in the paper. I filled out a lot of application blanks. Teresa O'Flaherty, aged seventeen, red-headed, homely. I tried to get jobs as a clerk, a cashier, a receptionist, a model. I even tried to get a job as a seamstress in one of the alteration rooms of a big department store. And that was when the big idea struck me! An idea born of hunger and desperation and a hotel bill that I had no means of paying.

The department store had turned me down and as I went dejectedly on my way, I noticed one of their departments in the better dress section labeled French Room. I watched the women in there—some of them buying clothes that couldn't possibly become them—and paying, I thought scornfully, perfectly outrageous sums for them. I remembered my mother explaining about labels and exclusive models.

I could hear her tired voice saying discouragedly: *They pay me so little. This same dress in the store would cost them many times as much—or if that French dressmaker in the new hotel made it. A lot of them go to her and pay enormous prices—yet I sew just as well. But if I asked the same amounts, they would laugh at me.*

I remembered how I used to like draping materials around me and how I had hated seeing people in things that weren't becoming to them. As all these things raced through my head I thought up a scheme—a scheme so wild and daring and crazy that it frightened me!

I went back to the hotel. I stared at myself in the mirror. I brushed my hair back vigorously—tight back. I knotted it high on the back of my head. I lipsticked my mouth brightly, left the rest of my face pale. I let out the hem in a plain black dress that had been cut down for me from one of Mama Chevalier's before I came to America. I cut a piece out of another black dress and wrapped it around my head in an exotic turban.

I said to the girl in the mirror: "Terry O'Flaherty, you're Therese now. You just came from Paris. You were one of the most successful young designers over there. You've got something new to sell over here. It isn't really new—but if you're smart, they'll think it is. You're going to be tough and temperamental and very French. You know what people should wear and what they shouldn't. You'll design original clothes for the individual. Models by Therese!"

Nobody will ever know how scared I was. But the luck and nerve of the Irish carried me through. This was the adventuring blood, the daring that I had inherited from my father. The ability to know color and line and rightness I had gotten from my mother, together with her knack of putting clothes together.

I went boldly to the best store in New York—Terry O'Flaherty from Texas who had lived six months in France! Now I was Therese. If they wanted a last name, it was Chevalier! I knew that Mama Chevalier would have willingly loaned me her name.

I demanded boldly in French to see the manager. I had all the gestures, the imperiousness. He could only understand half of what I was saying and had to call a French woman from the workroom. And I was good enough to fool her! I heard her translating into English my proposition. Therese, who had just arrived from Paris, would build up a trade for him with original designs for the customers willing to pay the price. Therese had several other plans so he would have to make an instant decision.

Mark Horman was smart. Perhaps he suspected from the first that I was not all that I pretended, but he knew immediately that the idea was a good one. We talked together—in broken English and French and with the help of the French woman. Sometimes I wanted to laugh out loud, it was so funny. After awhile he said he would give me a chance to prove what I could do.

THAT was the beginning of Therese. By the time Mark Horman found out that I was a fraud, it didn't matter any more . . . and he kept my secret. Because Therese was a success. I draped the customers in the colors I knew that they should wear. I draped and I pinned and I drew rough sketches and the work rooms had to do the rest. I was arrogant and tempestuous and temperamental; and the customers loved it. My clothes were expensive and they loved that, too, because when you had a little satin label in the back with THERESE EXCLUSIVE embroidered across it in green silk, you had something!

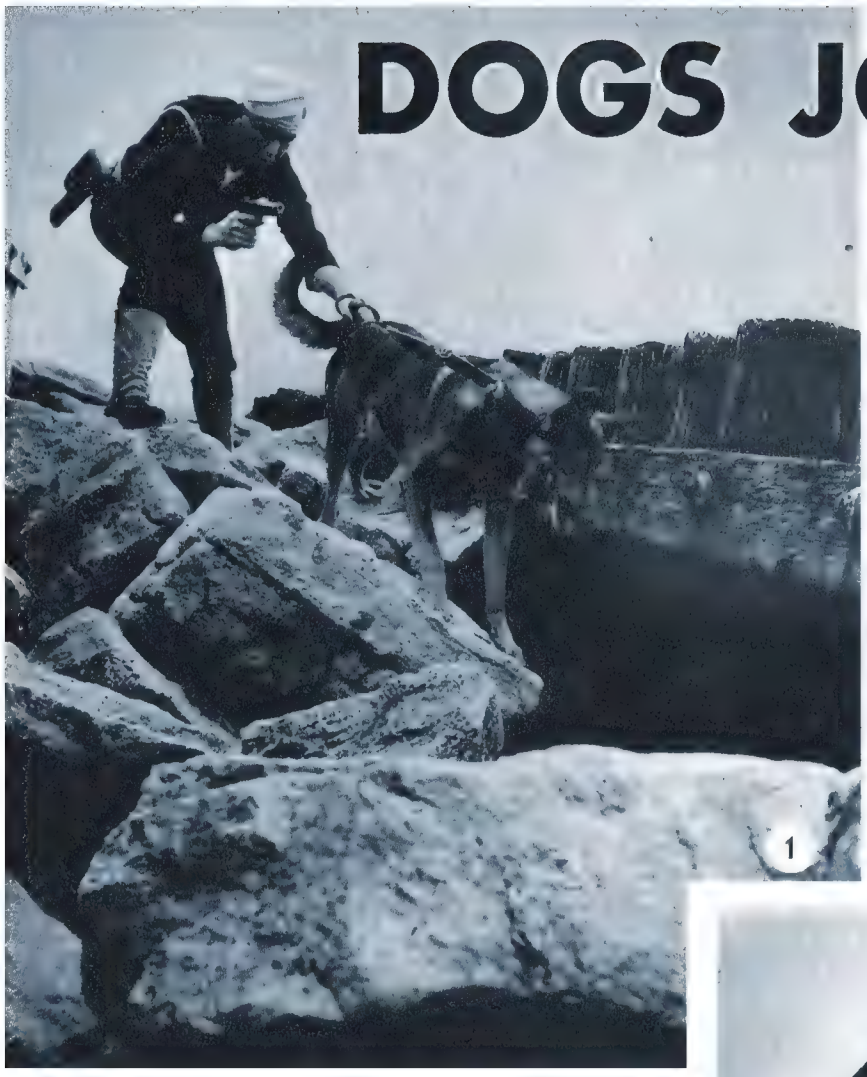
I became as famous as my clothes. Out of the skinniness and ugliness of Terry O'Flaherty something quite different had emerged. I still wasn't pretty—but I had made capital of what assets I possessed. My skinniness became an elegant slimness in the long-sleeved, high-necked dresses I wore. I had learned that green eyes and red hair needed no adornment. I had gotten rid of the freckles and in the creamy pallor of my skin, there was only the crimson red of my mouth and the deep green of my eyes, and above it the flame of my hair knotted low at the back. I never wore anything but black or white or green.

I was 22 when I left Mark Horman and opened my own exclusive shoppe with my luxurious private apartment above it. The war was raging in Europe and had just begun to touch this country. But women would still buy Therese dresses.

"You wouldn't like to give this all up and marry me, would you, Terry?" Mark Horman said gently. "Or keep it all if you want—and just add me to it?"

I shook my head. I liked and admired Mark tremendously. He would always be one of my dear friends. But I wasn't ready for marriage yet. I had the world just where I wanted it. I was 22 and I had achieved more success than most people have in a lifetime and I intended to achieve still more. [*Please turn to page* 84]

DOGS JOIN THE



SEMPER PARATUS—which means "Always Ready"—is the motto of the Coast Guard. Although the Coast Guard still patrols American shores, its principal work is landing troops in invasions and protecting convoys on the open seas.

Coast Guard cutters and patrol craft are in active duty keeping open our vital shipping lanes, and have sunk many Nazi U-Boats.

The SPARS are the Women's Re-

1. The dog on the leash is a trained killer, invaluable in ferreting out an enemy.

2. Swift, obedient, deadly, dogs are kept in form by Coast Guard as they patrol shores.

3. A saboteur is trapped! One false move and no matter what the odds, the dog would get him.

4. Man and dog share the lonely vigil of guarding the coastline. Between them is perfect teamwork.

COAST GUARD

serve of the Coast Guard and are now relieving shore-stationed Coast Guardsmen for active duty. If you are interested in enlisting in the SPARS, write to Lt. Commander Dorothy C. Stratton, Director of the SPARS, at Washington, D. C., or go to your nearest Coast Guard Recruiting office.

In the Coast Guard, the magnificent teamwork of trained men, women and animals, combine to make it one of the most powerful links in our nation's defense. These pictures, taken at a shore station on the Jersey coast, tell their own exciting, human story.

5

6

7

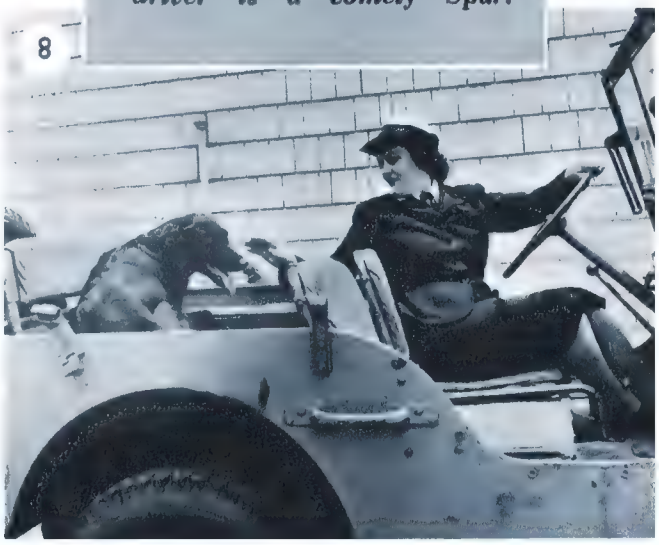
5. Not all the Coast Guard dogs are killers! Here is Smoky, pet of the Station.

6. Three Spars for the Midwest find everything cast up by the tide, of great interest.

7. The Coast Guard dogs are kept in the pink. Diet and health are closely supervised.

8. Smoky adores riding in a jeep, especially when the driver is a comely Spar.

8



HEARTBREAK

"Sultan! Drop her!" I screamed. But the elephant wouldn't obey. Frozen with horror, I helplessly watched the fierce jungle battle

UNDER THE BIG TOP

Behind the color and glamor of the circus are jealousies and passions as elemental as lightning. This is Bonita's story!

IF YOU live in one of the small towns along the Eastern Seaboard maybe you remember that day each year, long before the war, when Santley's Circus came to town. If you do, and you used to watch the parade, you will remember the tiny little girl bedecked with spangles who proudly marched at the head of the parade holding the end of a huge elephant's trunk in her tiny hand, as he followed behind her like a docile old dog. I, Bonita Burdett, was that little girl.

Sultan, we called my elephant, and I've loved him ever since the time he used to rock me in my homemade cradle with his trunk and cover me up every time I kicked the blankets off me. A strange sort of nursemaid, you think? Not if you know elephants like Mother, and Dad and I do. And now Sultan is dead!

Sultan is dead, I say! And so is his enemy; the beautiful white stallion—and all because I was jealous and lost my temper at a moment when a lifetime of training made me know I shouldn't.

Do you know what it is to be just passable, and not glamorous; and worship the man you are about to marry? My fiance was a young Prince Charming; handsome, kindly, whose whole body was a perfect symphony of strength and graceful agility.

Do you know the agony of seeing, day after day, a radiantly lovely girl, full of glamorous daring, lure your man away from you? Have you ever experienced the torture of watching them, unseen, exchange stolen kisses, while you look on and realize how inadequate you are against the beauty of your rival?

I have; and I say that no soul-searing hell was ever created for a woman, that is worse than this agony of jealousy.

I was billed on the circus as BONNY BURDETT. THE GIRL WHO DEFIES DEATH. Gaudy posters depicted me lying on the wicked looking tusks of Sultan while he stood on his hind legs, trunk raised.

I was born with "sawdust in my blood" as the circus folks say. The first realities my baby brain became aware of was the truck beneath the old trunk in which I lay; the long open roads with the big white tents at the end, the lovely lady who bent over me and kissed me as I grabbed for the bright spangles on her scant costume. I remember the laughing glee that always came to me at sight of the funny white face with the huge red painted mouth, the two red spots on the cheekbones, and huge black nose of Blotto, the clown —my father. And of course, Sultan, the elephant—my nurse.

The gaudy painted trucks and wagons, which have always been my home, have flashed their red and gold way down many highways since those days, and I, who used to lead the great elephant had become a queen of the slack wire, besides performing with Sultan. I was learning my profession, trying to make "The Big One," some day.

To make "The Big One" (which is Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey's Greatest Show on Earth) is the Mecca of all circus people. Even the humblest razorback hopes that someday he'll hoist canvas for "The Big One." It means the same to us as the Palace, Broadway, meant to the vaudeville actors in days gone by.

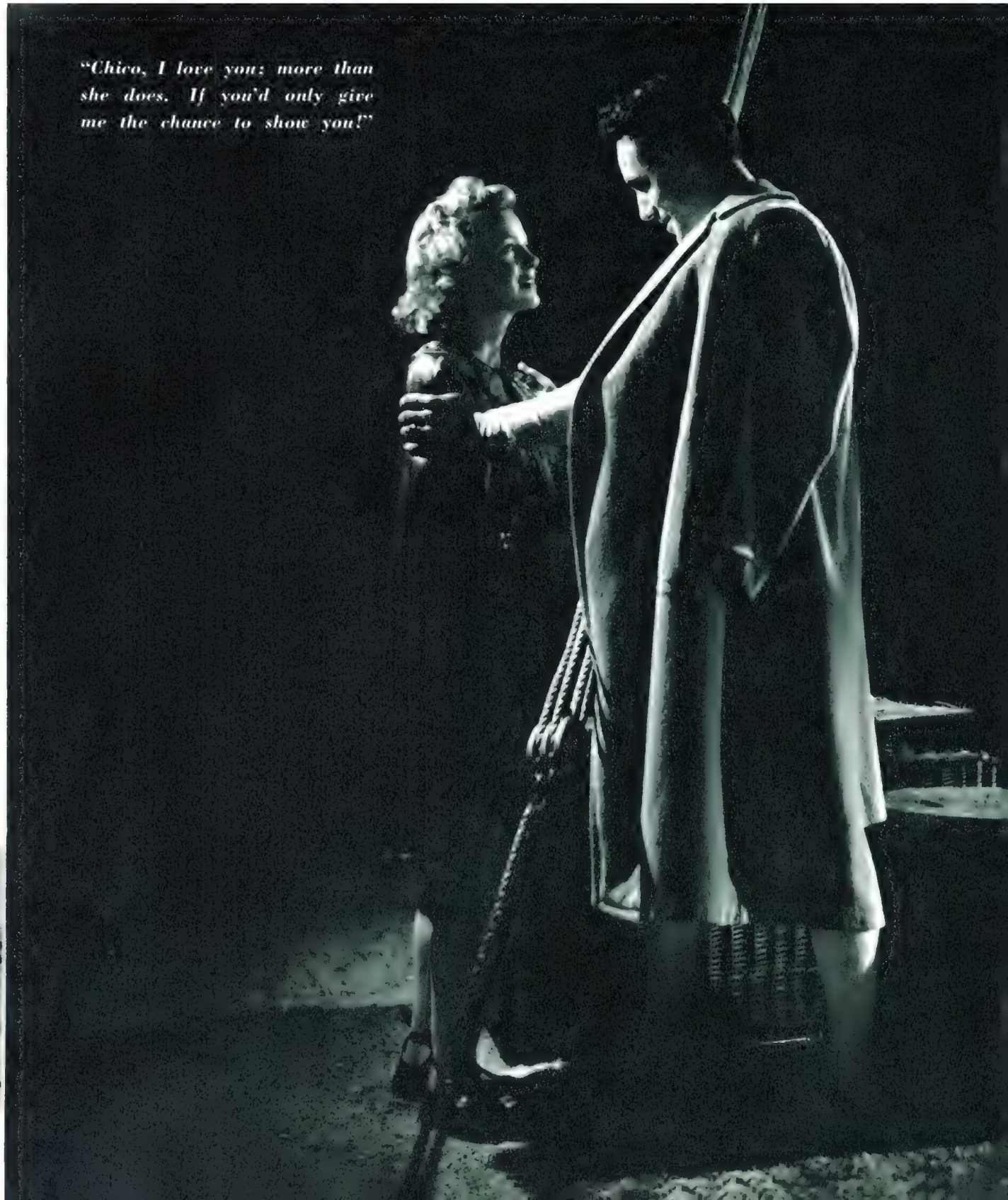
The first act I ever did was with Sultan when I was six and I tripped and fell on parade, one day, right in front of him. There was a cry of horror from the crowds on the sidewalks. They thought I would be crushed beneath his gigantic feet. How little they knew the sagacity of an elephant! Wise old Sultan picked me up with his trunk, lifted me high above his head, and placed me in safety right between his enormous ears, where even at that tender age I had the presence of mind to smile and take a bow.

That trick and thrill became a daily feature in the parade after that.

Nobody knew how old Sultan was, but he had belonged to my grandfather first and then to my Dad. They had trained him on most of his tricks but it was I who had taught him to lift me up with his trunk, place me on his tusks, raise his huge bulk on his hind legs, and carry me out of the ring in a grand exit that used to bring the people to their feet, cheering.

We'd been with Santley's five seasons when The Flying Mancinis joined us. The youngest of the family was Chico and I fell in love with him and he fell in love with me at first sight. Of course we didn't know it at the time because we were only ten years old. But something inside us seemed to recognize that we two had been born to meet and carry on together till the end of time. We went everywhere and did everything together, never happy when we were out of each other's sight.

By the time Chico and I were fourteen it became known in the circus world that Bonny Burdett would some day marry Chico Mancini and unite the families. After that no circus manager would dream of offering to book the Burdetts without the Mancinis. So Chico and I grew up together falling deeper and deeper in love as the years sped by.



"Chico, I love you; more than she does. If you'd only give me the chance to show you!"

OUR parents nodded and smiled and clucked over us like old hens. "It was good," they said. "Like would be marrying like. For the Burdetts and Mancinis were old circus families with generations of circus tradition behind them. Our secret tricks would be shared and handed down to our children; as is the custom.

Chico grew up straight and tall, wide-shouldered, barrel chested, and slim-waisted. The rigorous training his father put him through as a boy made him a marvel on the flying trapeze and by the time he was sixteen, he could already do a double somersault as he flew, sixty feet above the ring, from the flying bar to the catcher's hands. He was out to match the great Alfredo Codona by doing three; and many are the falls he had sustained while practicing!

I worshiped Chico and prayed in my secret heart, for the day when we would be married. But as time passed I became worried; because the cute little child hadn't turned out to be the beautiful young woman folks thought I would be. I passed all right in the ring with my make-up on and the glamor of the lights and the sensational acts that I did. I had lovely skin and hair and beautiful teeth, but in the plain light of day without my fine trappings, all the cosmetics in the world couldn't beautify my strong arms and broad shoulders.

You see, as soon as my second teeth were firmly set in my mouth, Spangles (my mother) started to train me to do an iron-jaw act. Probably you've seen the circus lady who hangs suspended from a dizzy height by her teeth, while she spins like a top from the swivel held in the teeth of her partner. Well, I did one of these acts with Spangles who hung head downward, her legs caught in two Roman rings from the rigging high up in the top of the tent. This act develops muscles in your arms, and shoulders, and neck.

My face was pretty and my hear was lovely, but I was always conscious of my shoulders and constantly wore scarves and veils to hide them. Once, I used to glory in my strength because Chico loved to do a hand to hand balance on my hands and I would let him down inch by inch until his lips touched mine. But now I was uneasily conscious of my shoulder breadth, not realizing that fine shoulders are as attractive in a woman as in a man.

When the season of 1941 opened and Chico and I were 21, we joined a big three-ring circus after wintering in Georgia. The star attraction on that circus was Lady Mazeppa, and her white stallion, Wildfire. She was one of the greatest equestriennes to come out of Europe. For the first time in my life I hated another human being; and Sultan hated her beautiful horse.

I hated her because, from the moment she laid her eyes on Chico she set out to get him. Her dazzling beauty, and her slim flashing limbs made Chico's eyes glow with a light that I'd never seen in them before. And Sultan hated Wildfire because the horse ran at me and tried to bite me a week after the season started.

It didn't take Mazeppa long to learn that Chico and I were to be married as soon as he was 23; so she hated me as well. It just happened that her riding act followed my act with Sultan, and when he had carried me out of the center ring into the canvas lane that connects the big top with the horse tent, she was standing there with Wildfire waiting for the announcement of her act.

I had just slipped off Sultan's tusks and was letting him take the lump of sugar from my lips, which I usually placed there for him after each performance, when there was a rush of hooves, a small squeal, [*Please turn to page* 68]

FAITH REDEEMED

ME

I was a little bored with the fashion show until suddenly I looked up and there was Sandra! Fascinated, I stared at her.

I WAS 22, beneficiary of a sizable trust fund, recently graduated from college and carefree as a lark when I first saw Sandra Cunningham, fell in love with her and married her a week later in spite of all her protests that "we scarcely know each other."

It was at the Roney Plaza at Miami Beach that we met. I was down for the sun and a fling at the races; and Sandra, with a group of hand-picked Conover girls, was there for just a few days modeling at a huge fashion show, which some society women were sponsoring for the benefit of the British War Relief.

They had erected a long runway from one end of the hotel ballroom to the other. The girls paraded down this and then stepped into the audience, floating as best they could between the closely packed tables, undulating with those slow graceful movements of trained models to display all the most flattering lines of their gowns.

I was sitting there at a table with a group of acquaintances, drinking perhaps a little too much, smoking, laughing, and just a little bored with the performance. I looked up, and there was Sandra coming down the stairs. I forgot my cocktail; I forgot my boredom. My heart must have been in my eyes as I stared at her.

She was a honey-colored blonde, and under her floppy hat her shining hair fell in soft waves over each temple, and was gently drawn back from the face to a cluster of curls at the nape of the neck. Her face was shaped like a heart. Her wide-eyed, frank enjoyment of the scene in which she was participating betrayed her youth and was in marked contrast to the more studied and experienced demeanor of the older mannequins.

She was modeling a debutante's "coming out" frock, one of those simple affairs that sets papa back about 500 bucks. I couldn't tell you much about it except that it was as delicate and wispy as cigarette smoke, and she seemed to emerge from the center of it like a budding flower from its enclosing petals.

As she approached my table, I couldn't stop staring. Our eyes clung for a moment, and then she moved on.

I said, "I want to meet that girl."

One of the men, Fatty Borden, who always boasted he had the greatest thirst in Florida, clapped me on the back. "Sky, you old wolf, what's on your mind?"

I grinned. "My intentions are strictly honorable."

I met her that same evening, of course. Schuyler Dwight Halsey was accustomed to having his own way. In 22 years of easy living I had never had to struggle for anything—money or passable good looks or an abundance of health or a large circle of agreeable friends.

My parents had died when I was young, and I was raised by remote control by a dry elderly uncle who managed my affairs with honesty and detachment. looked me over twice a year to see how I was growing, and then withdrew to the privacy of his bachelor apartments as though glad to wash his hands of me for another six months.

Another boy might have developed into a depraved hell-raiser, but I guess I must have had a sense of fastidiousness that restrained me from unlicensed behavior for I was never tempted to carouse —it seemed too messy to me, and I had too much respect for my young clean body. I was indulgent with myself, however, a trait which later was nearly to wreck my chances for happiness. Anything that caught my fancy I had to have, and I had to have it right away; not next week or next month. but right now!

So, when I met Sandra Cunningham after the fashion show, and saw her without her theatrical

Sandra, lovelier than ever, stood beside me. Her first words were that I was so thin. "I've been on a Hollywood diet," I wisecracked.

make-up and her glamor clothes, and my eyes took in the sweetness of the small oval face and I heard the music of her soft low-pitched voice, I said to myself, I've got to have her!

She didn't want to go on a date with me that evening. I overrode her objections by inviting several of her friends, pairing them off with friends of mine. We piled into two cars and drove over the causeway, the full tropical moon making silver magic of the night. Sandra sat a little away from me, not relaxing, and calling me Mr. Halsey all the time.

The fashion show had been held on a Friday night, and the girls were supposed to fly back to New York on Monday morning. I had to make the most of every minute. On Saturday morning I hauled my lazy bones out of bed at 7 a. m. and walked on the beach over to Sandra's hotel. My heroic act was rewarded; a little later she emerged from one of the cabanas and strolled to the water's edge, tucking her blond hair under her cap. She was wearing a simple white bathing suit that revealed a delightful perfection of line and limb, and my imagination played tricks with me, picturing her as an unreal sea-maiden borne in by the morning's tide.

The whole setting was out of this world—the background of fine white sand for which Miami is famous, the cloudless azure-blue skies, the reflecting azure-blue waves, the softly whispering palm trees.

I said lightly, almost afraid to break the spell that lay upon me, "Good morning, Miss Cunningham."

She turned with a jerk as though startled; and I perceived her eyes darting over me; tall and Florida-bronzed in my

bathing trunks, and coming to rest at my face as though not quite sure she recognized me.

"I'm Sky Halsey. We had a date last night. Remember?" I said in a half-joking way.

"I remember," she whispered, and to my astonishment, wheeled around and ran swiftly into the water. She splashed out a little ways and then made a sharp, cleancut, half-dive into the waves like a porpoise. She swam beautifully. I ran after her and dove in. She was an exceptionally fine swimmer, but no match for a man who had played water polo for four years in college; and I soon caught up with her.

It was a wonderful morning. The sun, the air, the wholesome exercise seemed to break down the barriers of her shyness and created an easy atmosphere of camaraderie that had been wholly lacking the evening before. We swam for awhile, breakfasted on the hotel terrace and idled away the rest of the morning hours stretched out in beach chairs under the shade of the palm trees.

She agreed to meet me that evening, but I couldn't wait that long. I was back at her hotel in the afternoon and sent messages up to her room every five minutes until finally she relented and came down.

Sunday morning, in spite of all my pleas that time was flying, she insisted upon going to church, and rather than miss one moment of being with her, I went, too. It was the second time in my life that I had been in a church; the first time being the occasion of my christening.

Sandra wore a dusty pink linen suit and a wide brimmed rough straw hat, and I thought she looked like an angel. Some of my bubbling spirits calmed down during that solemn hour in church. Sandra, although sitting next to me, seemed miles away, wrapped in a spirituality I couldn't penetrate or even comprehend. It made me uneasy, as though she were slipping away from me.

Right there lay the seeds of future dissension between us. Religion, thoughts of God, had never entered my earlier training. I was about as single-minded and worldly as a man can be; ease and comfort and getting the best things out of life for myself being all-important.

Sandra's nature was a more complex one. She, too, loved life with all the exuberance of the young, but she lived an inner life, too. She possessed a sturdy heart that strove to better itself, to live unselfishly, to dedicate itself to permanent values, not to the fleeting pleasures of the moment.

Sunday evening I took her out to dinner, and afterwards we went for a drive. Far out on the causeway I found a quiet secluded spot into which I nosed the car. Saying, "Let's talk," and without waiting for her consent, I killed the motor. My heart was pounding madly.

It was a night for lovers and song-writers and poets. The moon, full and silvery, was just above the line of the horizon, casting a broad avenue of light over the waters almost up to our feet. The air was still except for the gentle sighing of the palm trees, stirred by the ever-blowing restless trade winds.

Sandra sat partly in the shadow, yet I could discern the clear cameo-like definition of her profile, poised, motionless, as though she, too, felt the enchantment of all the beauty spilled around us so lavishly.

I said, "So tomorrow you leave me. Why can't you stay on for a few more days?"

"Because I'm a working girl, not a social butterfly. It's just as well for me if I don't have too much of this sort of life," she added candidly.

"I'm going to miss you."

She turned her face briefly toward me. "Thanks."

I moved closer. "Sandra, will you let me kiss you just once?"

Without speaking, she raised her lips to mine. Suddenly, she pushed me away, whispering brokenly, "Don't kiss me like that." Her breath came in gasps as though she had been running.

"Sandra, I love you," I said.

"Oh, stop it," she moaned.

"But you don't understand. I'm asking you to marry me."

To my surprise she began shaking her head in a sort of hopeless way. "No, Sky, no. It won't do. Please take me back to my hotel."

I tried to take her in my arms again. "What are you talking about? What won't do? What's wrong with me?"

"It's you and me. We're poles apart. Our lives, everything about us, is too different."

Frankly, I didn't know what she was talking about. It was too subtle for a one-track mind like mine. Either you liked a person or you didn't. Well, which is it, I demanded. I got just a shake of the head for a reply.

I became impatient. I argued. I stormed. In a temper I took her back to her hotel and drove off with a noisy clashing of gears. The next day I waited around in my hotel suite, confidently expecting word from her. When none came, I grew panicky and phoned her hotel. The girls were gone; had left that morning.

THIS was certainly a new experience for me. I, who had been chased by predatory females as far back as I could remember, had been given a cool brush-off. You can guess what I did. I packed my bags and followed her on the next plane. The following day I was ringing the door of her apartment.

I guess I caught her off-guard, for when she opened her door and saw me standing there she burst into tears. I went into her living room and pulled her down on the couch with me and held her in my arms until she had ceased trembling. I knew she loved me. I was sure of it now. But why in heck did she act like this?

"Dearest," I said, "what's this all about? You and I were getting along fine until I asked you to marry me. Since then, nothing seems to make sense. One minute you act as though you like me, and the next minute you put the length of the Atlantic seaboard between us as though you can't get away from me fast enough."

"I tried to explain," she said in a low voice. "We're—we're attracted to each other, Sky, but marriage is something more than mere attraction. We haven't a thing in common. You don't work because you've never had to, and I've had to help support myself ever since I was old enough to take out working papers. You're Social Register. My people are poor. My father is a gentleman, but not the kind you know. Do you know what I mean?"

"I'm not marrying your father," I smiled.

She shook her blond head. "It's more than that. You like smart company and lots of fun, and I don't. I wouldn't give you two cents for the liveliest party on earth."

"Sandra, these are all trifles," I protested. "You love me or you don't. Sure, I've got my faults, but who hasn't? Can't you take me as I am?" I seized her slender shoulders and held her so she had to look into my eyes. "Do you love me, Sandra?"

The velvety brown eyes were incapable of dissembling. My answer was there. I knew it was yes even before she admitted it. I kissed away her every objection; I kissed her into complete submission to my desires.

We were married just as soon as the necessary preliminaries could be arranged, and in spite of all Sandra's pleas that we wait a little while that we might grow to know each other better. I was Sky Halsey, the man who had to have what he wanted when he wanted it without waiting a day or a week. One promise, though, Sandra managed to wring from me. I was to find employment and go to work.

We honeymooned at Lake Louise. It was summer by the time we returned to New York and too hot to start work then, so I persuaded Sandra to let me postpone my hunt for a job. We spent six weeks at Bar Harbor, but when September rolled around, she became insistent, and we returned once more to New York.

The first of the quarrels began then. Frankly, I didn't want to go to work and couldn't understand Sandra's harping upon it. I had never done a day's job in my life, and the thought of being chained to a desk positively appalled me What was the sense of it? I argued. I had enough money to live on. I'd only be taking the position from someone who needed it.

"You promised me," would be her reply.

"But why, Sandra?" I would [*Please turn to page* 95]

"I hope you don't mind—but I've been getting acquainted with your little son."

SOMEWHERE WE LOST OUR LOVE

The story thus far:

I WAS only 17 the year Roger Mason and his widowed mother came to Woodbury. It wasn't long before Roger and I were seeing each other every night. I was planning to go to normal school, but on my eighteenth birthday, after I graduated from high school, Roger gave me an engagement ring.

As the summer went by, our every meeting deepened our longing for each other. I dreaded being separated from Roger in the fall, when I must go away to school.

In September Roger and I realized that nothing mattered except our love. We drove to Greenwich and spoke the vows that made us man and wife.

It was a shock to my parents and Roger's mother as well. Mother Mason frankly told me she didn't see how I was ever going to get along on Roger's salary—but that was my problem!

That first year we were terribly happy and only after little Donald was born, did money become a pressing problem. Not long after, Mother died and a week later my father was found dead with a heart attack. I was heartbroken and listless for months. Roger came home to an untidy house, a wailing baby, and a morbid, moody wife. I was always too tired to go out, so more and more Roger went out without me.

But everything was changed the day Roger received a letter from Chicago that his cousin had died and left $20,000. I felt that now—with money all our troubles would be over. But Roger, in a ragged voice, told me he wanted to buy his freedom with the $20,000. He wanted a divorce! I couldn't believe that the man I'd loved more than life was in love with another woman.

When Roger consented to giving me full custody of little Donny, there was nothing left for me to do.

That night Roger packed his bags and walked out of the house! Not only did he no longer want me as his wife but he was willing to part with Donny, too!

Mother Mason begged me to wait a year before I filed suit for divorce. But I feared my marriage had ended the night Roger left, and I told her bleakly that there seemed no alternative but for me to do as Roger wished.

Roger and I met once more in his lawyer's office and signed the necessary papers. Then I took a train for Miami—queen of divorce cities, paradise of gamblers. The city where I was to meet Jeff Cornell and find a passion for easy money—gambler's money!

Now go on with the story

PART II.

"HELL hath no fury like a woman scorned," a poet tells us. But it was not fury I felt those first empty aching weeks in Miami, but only a sense of cowering and cringing humiliation. I was like a small wounded animal that drags itself off into hiding. I wanted to see no one, talk to no one, but only burrow deeper and deeper into my solitude.

Had it not been for Donny I would have lapsed into serious illness. But for his sake I had to spend long afternoons on the beach, make our apartment a cheerful place.

Our first few days in Miami, Donny and I stayed at a hotel. Then Mr. Caley, the lawyer who was to get my divorce, recommended a two room and kitchenette apartment on Miami Beach. It was prettily furnished, near the ocean, and only a couple of blocks from a school Donny could attend for the three months I must spend in Florida to establish residence.

It is curious on what little things our destinies depend. If I had not rented that particular apartment I'd never have met Claire Travis, the young woman across the hall. I knew her name for I'd seen it on the mailbox. I was vaguely aware of her as rather a flamboyant figure always dressed in the latest and most extreme of fashions. But at first I avoided her overtures of friendliness when we chanced to meet in the hall.

It was Donny who brought us together. I went in search of him one afternoon and found him with Claire in the patio around which the three-storied, white-stuccoed apartment house was built. Donny loved that patio where a fountain played and masses of bouganvillea and hibiscus and jasmine bloomed, and he was always a friendly little boy ready to chatter eagerly with anyone who smiled at him.

"Hello, Moms," he called when I appeared. "This is a nice lady. She's been telling me a story and she's going to give me some cookies!"

Claire Travis was stretched out in a reclining chair near the fountain. She turned her head and smiled at me, a wide smile that made her thin face attractive. "Your small son and I have been having a lovely time, Mrs. Mason," she said. "He seemed sort of forlorn and at a loose end playing here by himself, and I was feeling the same way, so we've been making friends."

Compunction smote me. Poor Donny, I thought, I'm not much of a companion for him these days. Aloud I said, "You're very kind, I was lying down with a bad headache and I'm afraid it made me neglect Donny."

"I'm not kind at all, I've been having fun," Claire brushed aside my thanks. "Look, how about the two of you coming up to my apartment for those promised cookies? I've some soft drinks on ice, too."

"I'm sorry, it's very good of you," I said reluctantly, "but it's Donny's nap time."

"Then suppose I get the drinks and bring them across the hall to your place?" Her eyes danced and she gave a low throaty chuckle. "You see, Mrs. Mason,

I'm not an easy person to snub!"

Fifteen minutes later Donny, replete with milk and cookies, was sound asleep in the bedroom while Claire and I sat in the wicker furnished living room, with the Venetian blinds drawn against the sun, sipping the drinks, she'd brought over.

"This is good," I said, grateful for the coldness of the drink as it slipped down my throat. I was so desperately lonely that I was grateful to anyone who bothered to be friendly.

Soon Claire and I were calling each other by our first names and she was telling me that she was in Miami for the same reason that I was—to get a divorce.

"You?" I asked in amazement. "But—but you seem so gay, to have such fun. I mean—you're always going out at night or having parties."

"Sure I am. Why not? What does it get you sitting around moping and crying your eyes out? The best man alive, if there are any good ones alive, isn't worth it. What's your trouble, sister? Another woman hook your man? Or don't you want to talk about it?"

Unexpectedly I did want to talk about it, to tell this strange woman what I couldn't possibly tell my closest friends. Except for my mother-in-law I'd told no one my true reason for leaving Woodbury. Instead I'd let people think I'd gone South because I was run down in health and the doctor had recommended a few months of sun and salt air now that I could afford it.

Once the divorce had gone through, everyone would have to know, of course, but until then Roger and I had agreed to keep it secret. He wanted to avoid talk about himself and Eloise, and I wanted to avoid the pitying gossip of the girls with whom I'd grown up.

With Claire it was different. Claire and I met on common ground—both of us discarded wives. When she started asking me abrupt personal questions in

"All right, sonny, you can swim beyond the breakers, but hold tight to Jeff."

her flippant, hard-boiled manner, I answered her frankly. Once I had started talking I could not stop. It was as if some dam of reticence in me had broken, letting all the stored-up agony pour out. I found myself confiding in her the whole story of my marriage and its failure, all about Roger and myself and the legacy he was settling on me in return for his freedom to marry Eloise.

"Twenty thousand!" Claire's eyes had narrowed and she gave a low whistle. "Not so bad, sister! Not so bad! Of course it isn't any fortune, but then twenty grand isn't exactly hay either. The way you've been moping around here I thought you must be down on your luck. But with that much money, a girl as young and pretty as you—"

"Pretty!" I interrupted her bitterly. "I used to be that, when I first met Roger. I was voted the prettiest girl in my class in high school. But nowadays—"

"You look like a sick kitten, a half-drowned little kitten," Claire finished the sentence for me cheerfully. "But with a few extra pounds and the right clothes and make-up, you could still be a knock-out. You know what you need, Beth?"

Her eyes went over me appraisingly. "You need a new hair-do, some new clothes, a new boy friend! That's Dr. Claire's prescription and she's going to make you take it and like it!"

At Claire's insistence I got the new hair-do later that week, a softly curling permanent wave and a rinse that restored the lost golden sheen to my hair. But I couldn't possibly buy the clothes she kept urging me to get, the evening frocks and wrap and slippers.

"I just haven't the money, Claire, even if I had any use for clothes like that. Until my divorce goes through I've nothing but what Roger sends me. That's [*Please turn to page* 101]

Don't Ever Worry, Darling

DEAR JOHNNY . . . Dear Johnny . . . Dear Johnny . . . Sometimes all those letters rush back to me in an aching flood! All those letters I wrote to the man I loved—my husband. The letters that always ended, *Don't ever worry about us, darling. . . .*

Two years ago I wouldn't have believed it, had anyone told me what would happen to me. Because up to then I, Mary Howard, had scarcely known a day's unhappiness in all my 26 years. I had a fine husband, a child, a home. And though we weren't wealthy, we were quite well off. I had never been without a maid in my life.

Then we got into the war.

It's so queer now to remember that day. At noon I stood before my dresser, slipping a green velvet dress over my dark hair, a tallish, slender young woman with gray-green eyes that were utterly free of care. I was feeling relieved that my little girl's slight cold was better, and I was enjoying her excitement over her fourth birthday.

"Hurry, Mummy, you're pretty enough!" Susan danced up and down, her blond ringlets bobbing. "We have to get the party finished! Daddy won't be late, will he?"

"Well if Daddy is, we'll beat him up," I teased, then added: "He'll be in any minute, dear. He's not working; this is Sunday."

We were fixing the party decorations—Susan, the maid, and I—when my husband, still in hat and overcoat, burst into the room. His blond angular face wore an expression of stunned outrage. He told me the news he had heard over an outside radio, the news I hadn't heard yet. *We were at war!*

I think I knew what was coming, long before we talked it over. Johnny kept pacing back and forth across the broadloom rug. The outrage had deepened in his face, erasing the gay lilt of that one upslanted eyebrow. And as he paced, his shoulders seemed to square to military bearing, the way they had when as a boy just out of high school, he served two years in the Army.

My hands went limp over the little sweater I had been knitting, a band tightening around my lungs. After awhile, I managed to whisper:

"You want to enlist, don't you, Johnny?"

Yes, that was what he wanted. He turned to me, his voice torn by emotion: "Have I the right to leave you with Susan? Are you sure you can get along? You've always been so sheltered, darling! Even with the stock dividends you'll get and half my Army pay, it will be much less than you have now."

Maybe our decision sounds sudden. But we were what some people call "flag-wavers," I suppose. We loved America terribly. Besides, Johnny always reacted to things with hot-headed violence. . . .

Johnny and I had been married seven years—seven good years. The $20,000 worth of stock, which I had inherited

"I've got to leave here!" I wept. "I can't stay and have people believing that newspaper story."

from my father, had always augmented Johnny's salary with quarterly dividends so that we had always been comfortable. And our love was like a shining star between us.

Johnny left so soon. Just as soon as the hardware company for whom he worked could hire a new district sales-manager.

He didn't even come back on a furlough. He was transferred from a near-by camp to one in California. Alone in the house that silently cried his name from every wall, I received the first jolt about money in my life.

It came sealed in a long white envelope that said "Springfield Chair and Sofa Company" in the upper left corner. My

dad had been superintendent of their big factory. Johnny had invested all our savings in it since. I slit the envelope; read:

Dear Stockholder:

Due to priorities and the inability to get steel for springs, our factory is forced to close down for the duration. . . .

Steely fingers of terror closed around my throat, as my eyes flew to Susan. Our income was gone! The stock would pay no more dividends—would be unsalable—until the war was over!

To a girl like me, who had taken money as much for granted as drinking water, it was a terrible shock. And yet—

I didn't tell Johnny.

True, I sat down at my writing desk. But my eyes lifted to a photo of my beloved in uniform. I recalled the depth of his concern for me—and I simply couldn't tell him.

Only God knew my fears. Only He saw me wandering through the house that night, and heard my whispered prayers for a way to take care of my little girl.

A LETTER that came from Johnny's widowed sister, Noreen, a few days later seemed at least a partial answer to those prayers. Noreen wanted me to come and live with her.

Sure that she, who supported a child herself, could help me solve my problems, I prepared to go. I raised about $350.00 on our furniture, insurance policies, and the remains of a checking account. Johnny would continue sending half his pay (that small amount that had seemed so silly-sweet of him before!) and perhaps I might get some sewing to do in Rennington—the town where Noreen lived. I had always made our drapes and things. Sewing was the only thing I knew how to do. But we'd get along somehow, I thought, without worrying my husband.

The thought of her helped still my fears, and the ache of tearing apart our home. When all was done, I wired my new address to Johnny in California. I put on my fur coat, zipped up Susan's leggings, and we were on our way across Dakota on the twelve-hour journey toward a strange new life. That life had already begun. Already I had worked without a maid; already the muscles of my back were aching.

When we reached Rennington I thought the conductor had made a mistake! An ugly row of crudely thrown-up houses faced the station. Hundreds of people milled about the platform. Voices shouted. A factory whistle blasted six o'clock with an ear-splitting din. As I got down from the train, a whole stream of men poured from the coach ahead.

I remembered now that Noreen had mentioned that a defense plant had opened. We were in a boom town!

My first impression of Rennington filled me with a sense of panic. This was no place to bring a child! I was pushed around on the thronged platform. I picked Susan up in fear lest she be trampled. An elbow knocked off my fur hat—hopelessly I caught a glimpse of it beneath moving feet.

Every taxi was taken. Two busses passed, before I managed to squeeze into one. It stopped at every corner, while workers with dinner-pails fought their way out. Finally we got off. Just a few more weary minutes, and I'd be with my cheery sister-in-law.

Walking along in the wintry dusk I peered up at street signs for the address Noreen had written me. I couldn't find the number, so rang the bell at the nearest house to it.

"Is this seven thirteen?" I asked the woman who opened the door.

"Seven thirteen—" her words struck like a bomb, "burned down last night. It's a mercy the wind changed, or we—"

I heard my voice gasping. *"My sister-in-law! She lived on the third floor—Noreen Sparling!"*

"She's in the hospital." A firm hand caught my shoulder suddenly, pulling me indoors. "Here. Sit down, my dear. Let me get you a glass of water."

I can't bear to write of the tragedy that Mrs. Roland described to me. The sudden fire at dawn. Noreen throwing her child from a third-floor window to the firemen's net. Then, as she jumped, a wall crashing . . . throwing her off-balance to the cement sidewalk below.

Mrs. Roland took me that evening to the hospital while her husband minded Susan. But I was too late—Noreen was dead.

That is how I got a second little child to care for.

They gave him to me at the hospital. Noreen's son—Lance Sparling, aged eight, with little shudders running constantly through his sturdy small frame.

Back at the Rolands' house they brought an extra cot from the attic. I moved sleeping Susie onto it. I myself slipped into bed in the darkness, beside Noreen's sobbing son. My hands stroked his quaking shoulders, his tumbled hair—until at last he quieted and slept.

The next day I learned that Noreen's insurance had lapsed. Nothing remained for Lance. Even her burial must be paid for from my tiny resources.

With pen and ink, at Mrs. Roland's kitchen table next day, I wrote:

Dear Johnny . . . you must prepare yourself for tragic news. Your sister Noreen—

Softening it as best I could, I told of her tragic death, and that Lance was with me.

Then I was on my feet, walking back and forth across the room, hands strained to my sides.

How could I, soft and inexperienced, ignorant of practical things, possibly provide for myself and two young ones? Yet even then I couldn't tell him of losing our income. In the end I didn't even mention that no insurance was left to help take care of Lance.

He must have got my air-mail letter just about the time I got his telegram. A messenger stopped at Mrs. Roland's, trying to locate me. She handed me the telegram when I returned from Noreen's funeral.

Unbelievingly I stared at the words:

MARY MY DEAREST. THIS IS IT. WE ARE BEING SHIPPED OVERSEAS SOON. BE BRAVE MY DARLING AND I WILL COME BACK TO YOU. KISS SUSIE FOR ME. JOHNNY.

Four little lines going straight to a woman's heart! Suddenly I heard the roar of guns from clear across the Pacific! I saw him standing amidst the fire, dear as my very flesh! His light hair gleamed above the broad shoulders, above the funny slanted eyebrow.

Sue pattered into the room, and stopped, eyes widening with fright on my face. My voice sounded hoarse, dragged out at such a terrible effort.

"It's—all right, Susie. Everything is—all right." You say it to children, I guess, even if you're dying.

I had to face our economic predicament. There was no Noreen to help me with advice. Now it was up to me. Responsibility rested like a mountain on my shoulders; kept me awake in the darkness. Sewing was out of the question now for I was broke . . . I needed a regular income quickly.

IN THE morning I went to the defense plant, a subsidiary of an Eastern airplane company, which manufactured plane parts. I stood in line with hundreds of others. When my turn came the girl behind the desk asked what line of work I wanted. I barely found my voice to murmur:

"Anything."

Her eyes slid over me. "Do you know typing? Stenography?"

I shook my head. They weren't training totally inexperienced women for the factory jobs just yet, she said. The messengers were all youngsters. But they could take me on as a file-clerk trainee in the production department.

Such a wave of relief washed over me that I turned my head to hide a rush of tears—and found my eyes caught on a tall, dark, handsome man who stood in a doorway. He looked familiar.

"He'll be your top boss." The girl's eyes followed mine, filling with almost personal pride. "That's Mr. Stanton, our production co-ordinator. He's a grand guy. He does the work of ten men around [*Please turn to page* 89]

CALLING ALL MOTHERS

It takes tact, not scolding, to get your youngster to sleep.

TRUE CONFESSIONS' GUIDE TO CITIZENS OF TOMORROW BY SIDONIE M. GRUENBERG
DIRECTOR, CHILD STUDY ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

OBEDIENT CHILDREN—*Yes or No?*

WHY doesn't my child obey? Here's a question that every young mother starts asking early in her baby's life, and she keeps right on asking it through the years. Practically every mother feels that if her child does *not* obey, she has somehow failed. She nurtures the idea that children *should* obey, and somewhere she must have done something wrong. Mothers are willing to try anything and everything to make up for past errors and to get their children to obey. Here in their own words, several mothers tell of this universal feeling.

Will you please tell me if a baby 1 year old is too young to obey? I have often slapped him but it does no good.

* * *

How can I get my little boy to obey me? He is 2 years old and doesn't seem to know the difference between right and wrong. I try reasoning with him and I also must admit he gets a good many lickings a day, but nothing seems to work.

* * *

There are many instances when my 4-year-old daughter refuses to obey. I realize that in some way I have failed in raising her but don't know where or how. I've tried everything such as talking, making a game of things, shaming her, coaxing and even bribing. All to no avail.

This feeling of failure is common among mothers if their children aren't perfect. The very first thing to do is to get rid of that feeling. There is no way of getting perfect results; there is no way of preventing such behavior in children; it is normal. Our problem is to learn how to manage it so that, in time, our children will learn what is expected of them.

To answer the first of these questions: a baby 1 year old *is* too young to be expected to mind. Even the little boy of 2 is unable to know right from wrong. He only knows that certain things please his mother and that certain things do not. Gradually, as the child grows older, we want him to learn how to be reasonable, but at 1 and 2 and for a long while after, that is too much to expect. The point is that his mother must be reasonable. She must be consistent in her ways and in her reactions and in the standards she holds up to her baby. In time she can interpret all this to the child or, better still, he will find out for himself that it is reason and no whim that governs his mother's behavior toward him.

The "experimental" mother in the last statement I quoted has undoubtedly gotten her little girl thoroughly confused by now. It is hard for a child to know right from wrong, but this little girl hasn't even had the opportunity to know what pleases her mother and what doesn't. The same action on her part will be treated as a laughing matter at one time and as something to be ashamed of the very next day.

This mother would be much better off if she would treat each situation in a way that her reason and instinct tell her is right for that particular situation. In that way her little girl could learn what is expected of her, what actions make her mother play games with her, what actions bring forth disapproval and so forth.

I think the biggest worry to mothers is that "nothing seems to work" because they expect it to work the very first time. A situation arises; a child takes a piece of candy or goes out in the rain without a coat or hat or rubbers; he gets a good talking to or a slap. His mother expects him to have learned a lesson for once and for all. No one incident, however perfectly it is handled by the mother, can teach a child a lesson *for once and for all.* Children learn very slowly. They learn by making mistakes, by being reprimanded and by being praised. They learn how their mothers react to different kinds of behavior and, eventually, they learn the reasons for these reactions. Later they learn that these reactions and these reasons have to do with "right" and "wrong." As they grow older they have to learn to decide for themselves what is the best thing to do without wondering what mother will think about it. But that is a very advanced [*Please turn to page* 64]

"Did you actually believe I'd let you go, Kit? Did my love seem as petty and small as that?"

SECOND CHANCE FOR HAPPINESS

WOULD I be writing this story, I wonder, if my desire to be alone with the man I'd learned to love so swiftly, so blindingly, hadn't prompted me to suggest an evening where there would be just the two of us? Yes, I think so. I think that that desperate appeal that came out of the past would somehow have reached me. Because no past can be buried so deeply that it won't someday rise again and touch the present, the future.

I was thinking only of the present, the glorious, thrilling wonder of the new life I had found, when I asked Mel to have dinner in my apartment, spend the rest of the evening sitting in front of the fire listening to the radio, talking, getting acquainted, really. Because our courtship had been such a whirlwind one, and there had been so much fuss and publicity over the announcement of our engagement, that we were almost strangers—except for the moments when we were in each other's arms.

Those moments had been so few, so brief. For my days were filled with rehearsal, business engagements, beauty parlor appointments; the hundred and one small problems that take up the time of a popular radio performer. Six nights a week I was on the air. Mine had been a busy life even before the evening when Captain Melvin Petrie and I had taken one long, tumultuous look into each other's eyes and decided we'd found a new answer to living.

Our love came as unexpectedly to Mel as it did to me. I didn't go in for men at all. And Mel didn't go in for the sort of girls whose job it was to keep in the public eye; to consider it part of their profession to appear at the swankiest parties, the most glittering night spots. If there hadn't been the war; if Mel hadn't suddenly found himself a hero, we would perhaps never have met. But he couldn't refuse to attend a party given in his honor, any more than I could refuse a command from the higher-ups who paid my salary not only to attend, but to see to it that I wangled some publicity out of it that would help my broadcasts.

Not that I needed those orders to make me want to capture one of our newest and bravest hero's attention. One glance into his level, black-lashed gray eyes had done it. I wouldn't have cared if he had been a private, going through his first weeks of training. I wasn't seeing a high-ranking uniform, or the distinguished medals attached to his breast. I was seeing a tall, strong-featured man, with a tired mouth, and eyes that held a shadow of things he didn't want to remember—and a hint of boredom at the hilarity around him. Then we were introduced, and he gave me a smile that hit me so hard and fast, my heart shook.

"I'd like to ask you to dance, Miss Bronson," he said, still holding my hand. "But I'm afraid this leg of mine isn't up to the Conga line. Perhaps, though, I could get you a drink."

"No—no, thank you," I heard myself stammering, as foolishly as if I'd been a school girl, instead of a professional entertainer. "I don't drink. I mean, I only accept when I have to be polite. I don't care to dance, really. But could we—couldn't we find somewhere where we could sit and talk?"

Walking hand in hand, neither of us thinking or caring about the interested, astonished, envious glances that followed us, we walked from the ballroom, and found a divan in a secluded corner. I suppose we must have talked. I can't remember hearing anything except the thunderous beating of my heart that I had thought would never again beat in the deafening rhythm of rapture.

Hypnotized, I moved through the days that followed. I was in a dream. Was it really I who whispered huskily, "Yes. Oh, yes, my darling!" when Mel asked me to marry him.

I let him put an old- [*Please turn to page* 46]

"I Made It"

Photographs by Dorothy Gale

YOUR GUIDE TO FASHIONS

CATHERINE ROBERTS, DIRECTOR

Everyone's sewing now! You have no time to shop for patterns, fabrics, buttons, trim? Get yourself the new Sears, Roebuck Fall Catalogue. Go quietly mad with joy at your discoveries. Write an order. Mail it. You're ready to sew!

Fashions

Back views of "I Made It" fashions

An easy to make tailored suit. The smart plaid, wool and rayon, gives distinction to the simplicity of the pattern. Flap pockets and high-buttoned front jacket, kick pleated skirt. Fabric, $1.69 yd., pattern No. 36F6701. Grand with sweaters.

Everyone looks trim in a jumper. This Kelly green, silver buttoned corduroy, 97c yd., pattern No. 36F6900, and tailored blouse of rayon faille crepe, 98c yd., pattern No. 36F8287, make a perfect combination for all daytime wear. Sure fire hit!

Attractive fall date frocks that *you* can make. Opposite page; black rayon crepe with aqua front, $1.49 yd., pattern No. 36F6802. Back buttoned princess frock of brown velveteen, $1.65 yd., dainty lace trim, pattern No. 36F6909. Easily made.

THE patterns and fabrics illustrated on these pages may be ordered by mail from Sears, Roebuck Fall Catalogue, through Order Offices and Mail Order Desks in all Sears, Roebuck retail stores.

"Hello Richard," I said evenly. Only my training in acting kept me from gathering him in my arms.

[CONTINUED FROM PAGE 43]

fashioned diamond and emerald ring on my left hand, and I had to fight back the tears when he murmured, "It's a family ring, dearest. I'll get you another one later, if you like. But I'd sort of like to have you wear this one for awhile, because you're the first girl I've ever wanted to offer it to."

But I'm not the girl you think I am! Why didn't I cry out those words? Why didn't I tell him I wasn't worthy of that ring, or the sort of love he was offering?

With my whole body aching, crying out for the happiness he was offering, how could I? The past was over, buried deep under layers of years and years of armoring myself against pain and hurt. Surely I had atoned for that past, by the hardships and suffering I had endured.

A fighting chance, anyhow. And I was plenty used to fighting. So the day when I invited Mel to spend the evening alone in my home, I had definitely made up my mind to marry him the first minute it was possible. I didn't intend to tell him that I wasn't the twenty-two year old girl that I looked, but a woman of twenty-eight. Neither was I going to confess that I already had had a husband—and a baby.

What good would it do? I argued to my nagging conscience. He loves *me;* the person I've become, not the foolish, blindly infatuated child I was. Why should I spoil his picture, hurt him cruelly? We have so little time to be together. They'd be sending him back in a few months. The next time he goes out, he may not come back.

I didn't dare dwell on that thought. Yet it was there, haunting me as it haunts the heart of every woman today whose dearest love is at war. It crystallized my determination to send him away with the loveliest memory I could create.

It was in that spirit that I donned my best hostess gown of peacock blue velvet, for our first evening alone together. The softness of the material and the expensive lines brought out the slenderness of my figure; the vividness of the color made my eyes nearly the same shade. I didn't need make-up. Excitement had already made my coloring warm against my hair. Besides, it made me look young, as young as I felt in my heart. It was truly with the shyness of a woman going to meet her first love, that I went to the door to greet Mel.

He drew in his breath sharply, audibly, when he saw me. "I—I'm almost afraid to touch you," he marvelled. Then he took the hand bearing his ring, and crushed it against his lips. "Oh, Kit, I don't know how to say this. I guess I've lost the knack of making pretty speeches. Not that I was ever much good at them. But I think that it was knowing that I was going to meet you that made me hold tight when I was sure my number was up."

Suddenly his trembling arms were around me. "I thought I'd forgotten what it meant to feel scared. But I don't think I could take it if I lost you, darling."

"Don't say that!" I buried my [*Please turn to page 75*]

Now's the time to show how much you love him!

SOMEHOW, on Bill's last leave, you sensed it was going to be good-bye. And suddenly—in that fearful moment—you knew how much you really loved him!

Loved him? Why, your sun rises and sets on that big overgrown boy who's gone across the seas. Nobody ever loved anyone else more than you love your Bill. Nobody could.

And here's how you can prove your love—and show how deep it goes!

Watch your spending. Give up everything and anything you don't absolutely need. Save a quarter here. Deny yourself a dollar's worth there.

And put the money you save—every bit of it—into War Bonds!

War Bonds will speed our tanks from the assembly lines to the battle lines . . . and our latest planes from blueprints to blue skies.

War Bonds will help to plan the peace that will make victory stick.

War Bonds are a part payment for the privilege of being an American—and a down payment on your future happiness with Bill.

And you don't have to consult a broker or a banker to know what a safe, sensible investment they are.

They're secured by fertile fields and ore-rich ranges, teeming rivers and bustling mills—by all the wealth and enterprise that spell out U. S. A.!

There's nothing better, for anybody's money. Start buying as many War Bonds as you can today!

Here's what War Bonds do for You!

1 They are the safest place in all the world for your savings.

2 They are a written promise from the United States of America to pay you back every penny you put in.

3 They pay you back $4 for every $3 you put in, at the end of ten years . . . this is interest at the rate of 2.9 per cent.

4 You may turn them in and get your cash back at any time after 60 days. The longer you hold them, the more they're worth.

5 They are never worth less than the money you invested in them. They can't go down in value. That's a promise from the financially-strongest institution in the world: The United States of America!

SAVE YOUR MONEY THE SAFEST WAY—BUY U. S. WAR BONDS REGULARLY

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WORLD'S LARGEST-SELLING EYE BEAUTY AIDS

"Could I speak to Miss Winfield—your daughter, I guess. She doesn't know I'm coming. I'm surprising her."

MIDDLE-AGED GLAMOR GIRL

I HADN'T wept for a long time, and the tears came hard. I tried to hold them back as I hurried down the dark streets from the River Point Playhouse, but with every remembrance of what had just happened, there came a little spurt of scalding drops. Blindly I stepped into a puddle of water. It oozed coldly over my new pumps that were pinching my feet, and I remembered I had left my rubbers and umbrella back there on the seat, forgetting them entirely in my haste to get away. Rain spattered down on my new hat, too, and it would never look the same. It had been a cheap hat, anyway.

Maybe if I had got that smart little outfit I had looked at so longingly, this never would have happened. I snuffled, thinking of that. In my heart of hearts I knew it wouldn't have made any difference. Youthful clothes and bleached hair can't make you look young if you aren't young. They had shown me that, tonight, back there in the Playhouse.

Burning resentment and humiliation rose in me, and I felt I hated everyone of them—Mr. Horgan most of all, because he refused me the part I had wanted.

I hurried faster, squashing through the rain, hurrying to Chuck, longing for his comforting arms, and for the words that would soothe my wounded vanity.

But he wasn't there. My sister-in-law, Paula, was sitting at the desk in the living room, biting her fountain pen, looking distracted.

"That you, Sally?" she called, hearing me in the hall. "Back so soon?"

"Yes. Where's Chuck?" I hung up my limp, wet hat.

"Air-raid meeting," she said absently. "Sally, come help me with this letter. Gosh, I'd rather take a beating than try to write a letter. Wish I'd never volunteered to correspond

Another Pond's Bride-to-Be

BARBARA HODGES

of Rutherford, N.J., engaged to Robert Greacen U.S. Army Air Corps

BARBARA'S RING—is a beautiful clear solitaire, with two small diamonds set in platinum on either side.

A WAR-TRAINED map reader and engineering "draftsman," charming blonde Barbara Hodges is *working*—not just waiting—for the return of her aviator fiancé.

You'd never guess Barbara spends hours at a drafting board daily—her clear, blonde skin looks so fresh and sweet, so beautifully cared for. "Pond's Cold Cream is what makes my complexion happy," she says. "It does *such* nice clean, soft things for my face after a hard day's work—I just adore it!"

This is Barbara's *soft-smooth skin care:*

SHE SMOOTHS on cool, fragrant Pond's Cold Cream and *pats* its lovely softening moistness all over her face and throat with brisk little pats, to soften and release dirt and make-up. Then tissues off well.

SHE "RINSES" with *more* Pond's Cold Cream—swirling her cream-coated fingertips around in little spiral whirls. This second creaming is to make her skin *extra specially* clean and soft. Then, she tissues off again.

BARBARA'S SPARKLING FACE has that truly "engaged-sweet" look! "It ought to have," she laughed. "I give it the grandest beauty care I know—with Pond's."

PRETTY GUIDE to two French sailors from the French-American Club. "*C'est magnifique*" the boys exclaim gazing up at the Rockefeller Center buildings in New York. And—"*Elle est charmante*" they chorus about Barbara's typical American loveliness.

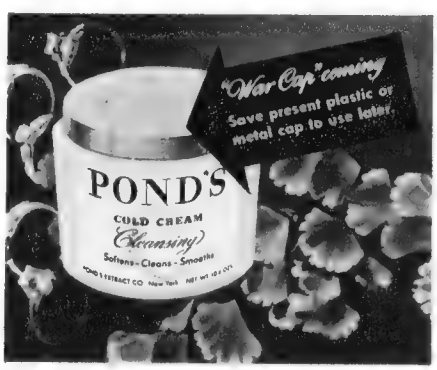
She's Engaged!

She's Lovely! She uses POND'S!

COPY HER DAILY BEAUTY RULE . . .

Start giving *your* face Pond's soft-smooth complexion care—*every* morning, *every* night, for daytime clean-ups, too! You'll love the fresher color it brings up in your cheeks—the softer-to-touch feel it gives to your skin.

Yes—it's no accident lovely engaged girls like Barbara Hodges . . . and society's most noted beauties like Mrs. William Rhinelander Stewart and Britain's Lady Kinross prefer Pond's to any other creams. Buy a lovely big jar of Pond's Cold Cream now.



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Sweater Girl?

However young and shapely your figure . . . beauty demands the superb aid of a Flexaire Bra — to sculp those firm, uplifted, divided, and well-defined bosom contours that look so exquisite under daytime sweaters and sleek satin date dresses. Sizes for Junior, Average, Full Bosom.

FLEXAIRE BANDEAUX • $1 • $1.50 • $2
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Flexaire
by FLEXEES

the BRA for bosom beauty

with this soldier. I'll have to find some other way to be patriotic!"

In the hall mirror I caught a glimpse of my face with the tear marks standing out like welts. I looked a fright. But Paula didn't even look up, she scribbled a word or two and mussed up her hair.

I went over to her, carefully keeping my face in the shadow. Paula was my husband's sister. She lived with us, worked in the same munitions plant as Chuck.

"This soldier I'm corresponding with sounds like such a lonesome soul, but honest, I just freeze when I try to write him. I can't think of a thing to say! Here, read this letter.

The letter began, in a large, firm hand:

Dear Miss Winfield:

When I told the woman at the USO that I would like a pen pal I didn't expect anything to come of it. And so when I got your letter I was tickled pink. I'd almost given up asking for mail. You see, my crowd back in New York are mostly musicians and actors, and they're notoriously poor correspondents. Anyway, most of them are either in the service or on tours entertaining in the army camps.

It's a good work, and the boys certainly appreciate the entertainment, but I'm glad I decided to enlist. A couple of seasons ago I played a bit part in Kit Cornell's play—the part of a soldier, but this is the real thing—

I looked up to gasp at Paula, "Why he's played on the New York stage! Paula, what a stroke of luck for you to be able to write to him."

"Sally," Paula said thoughtfully, "you know all about acting and music, tell me what to say," she pleaded. "He wouldn't be interested in typing and bookkeeping, and that's all I know. Darling, just dictate, and I'll write it down."

At the word "acting" I felt my eyelids burn again. I stood behind her, blinking back the tears as I dictated:

Our little town of River Point is very interested in the theater. Every year we put on a couple of good plays—generally one of Ibsen's or Shaw's, and a modern one, too. . . .

I went on, describing our playhouse and the way we tried to make our performances as professional as we could.

Paula was delighted. "Sally, let's tell him about how you have the lead in the play we're putting on now." She twisted around, looking up at me proudly. Then she cried, "Why, Sally! You're crying! What's the matter?"

At this moment Chuck came breezing in.

I forced a smile as Chuck came over to kiss me. "Oh, it's nothing. It's just—well, I'm not having the lead in the play this year. Mr. Horgan thinks I look too old for the part." My throat closed convulsively, as I gasped, "He offered me the part of the mother."

"Well, of all the nerve!" came loyally from Paula, and she squeezed my arm protectively. Chuck took off his air-raid helmet as he said slowly, "When I read the play, I thought the mother part was more important anyway. You're such a good little actress, honey, you'd be swell no matter what part you played."

"But I'm not old!" I choked. "I don't want the part of an elderly woman! Horgan just did it to humiliate me in front of the cast. They're all jealous because I've always had the lead! The little snip of a girl they picked can't act at all." I rushed from the room, and threw myself across my bed weeping. I had to muffle my sobs. It wouldn't do for Jill and Peter, sleeping across the hall, to hear their mother carrying on like a fool because she didn't get the leading part.

I hadn't been much older than my daughter when I got stage struck. I had been playing small parts with the local stock company when I had met Chuck, but our marriage had put an end to all that. I had given up my stage ambitions and to tell the truth, Chuck's love and my two children completely filled my life.

My interest in the theater, however, was kept alive by our amateur theatrical group and the excitement of seeing my picture in the local paper, the fun of being the leading lady and hearing people say: "You've got two children? Why, I thought you were just a girl in your teens!"

I adored hearing people say that! I prided myself on my slight active figure, my clear complexion that needed no cosmetics, my brown glossy hair. All through my twenties it had been like that. I had played along with my children, gone on hikes, swam with them. Long before it had been the style, I had made the three of us, Jill, Peter and me playsuits that were alike.

Chuck thought it was cute, and I didn't care if some old gossips in the neighborhood disapproved. Let them get fat and middle-aged if they wanted to, I thought. I was going to stay young with my family. No reason to let yourself go just because you had a couple of children, I reasoned.

THEN two years ago, on my thirtieth birthday, I had been siezed with a sudden attack of pain. I had been rushed to the hospital, and there followed a long period of specialists, and X-rays, and finally a major operation. My life was in no danger, but I was a long time convalescing. For almost a year I had to take care of myself; no more swimming or hikes. No more dancing or parties or late hours. I had to vegetate until I was recovered.

That illness did something to me. My hair was streaked and faded with gray. My figure looked matronly and settled—I had put on weight. My fresh youthful complexion was gone.

At first I didn't realize what had happened. It wasn't until I was buying a dress, that the salesgirl said, "This has slimming lines, madam, and the white against your face is youthful,"—that it came to me how I had changed. I stared with horror into the long triple mirror.

HOW NOT TO WIN THE WAR

"Helen sent me. She says you have nylons."

I saw the bulges, the coarse pores and brownness of my skin. Where had my prettiness gone? I looked old! I didn't want to! I wanted to look lovely and young—I was only 31 after all!

For a year I had kept out of the little theater—the doctor had forbade it. But I was determined to get back into things this year. They were going to give Lily Finds Her Man. Lily was a 20-year-old debutante with blond hair. Looking this way, I realized I couldn't get the lead. But they weren't casting for six weeks. I had plenty of time, I decided briskly, to get into shape for it.

So I got hold of a freak diet, and lost twelve pounds in a hurry, all right. But it all came off the wrong places. My face and neck just fell in and my legs got thin as matchsticks. Yet I was still thick through the middle. My skin, from lack of fats, grew dry and scaly. And my hair! I sat in the beauty parlor, seeing with dismay how bad my hair looked. "Isn't there something you can do to make this frizzy mop look better?" I asked the girl. "Somehow I never thought I'd go gray so young."

"With your delicate features, Mrs. Winfield, you'd be stunning as a blonde," said the girl smoothly. "Pure white hair is lovely against a young face, but streaked hair like yours only makes you look old. You'll look gorgeous with soft golden hair with your brown eyes."

I let her talk me into it. Or did I? Wasn't I hoping that bleached hair would perform a miracle, bring back vanished youth?

The effect on my family was tremendous. They were already at supper when I walked in and took off my hat. Chuck sat frozen, with a fork halfway to his mouth. Paula gasped. Peter uttered a long whistle. And 8-year-old Jill began to cry.

Chuck slammed down his fork in a fit of rare anger. "What in heavens name have you done to yourself?" he roared.

"I don't like you to have different colored hair," Jill sobbed. "You don't look like my mommy anymore."

"Stop acting like a cry-baby," I snapped to cover my sudden remorse. "Peter, you like it, don't you?"

"It's all right, I guess," he said judiciously, "if you can wash it out tomorrow before any of the kids see it?"

My husband jerked away from the table, motioning for me to follow him upstairs. He never argued in front of the children. In the bedroom he faced me, his eyes snapping. "This foolishness has got to come to a halt. You've starved yourself haggard, and now you look like a burlesque dancer. What's the big idea, anyway?"

I worked myself up into anger to cover my sense of guilt. "Why your stenographer hennas her hair," I raged. "Do you read the riot act to her, too?"

"That's her business, not mine," he retorted. "She's not the mother of my children."

"What difference does that make!" I demanded cuttingly, "I'm not dead and buried just because I'm thirty-two years old and got a family." Then frightened at his expression, I backed down. "I only did it because Lily in the play has blond hair. I'll let it grow out afterwards. Anyway," I added defiantly, "I'm not going to let myself get like Joan Slater."

We chummed with the Slaters more than any other couple. Joan was about my age, but she looked years older. She was short and chunky, and didn't give a hoot how she looked.

Well, I managed to patch up our quarrel. Secretly I was delighted with my

What the well-dressed soldier writes about

"...the folks sent me some packages for Christmas. One of them contained some Fels-Naptha and I've just finished washing two pairs of wool sox. You know what happened. Two of the men came in the room we use for laundry etc. and begged me for the rest of the cake so they could wash their g.i. long-handled underwear. I said sure, now I can see the longies hanging on the line outside of my office. These are probably the only garments in North Africa without "tattle-tale gray"!

"My French maman, Mme. Lamblin uses Fels-Naptha and she also irons my stuff. When I tell her it's not necessary she says it is necessary to iron the clothes to kill the insects. So I start over and try to expatiate on the merits of Fels-Naptha in French, but she still irons the clothes!"

Perhaps you have a man in the Service who's keeping a little cleaner and healthier with Fels-Naptha Soap. If so, you'll find it easier to be patient when you can't always get Fels-Naptha when you want it. We're doing all we can to keep *your* grocer supplied.

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transformation. I studied and practiced the play and the night of the tryouts I was full of confidence. Then the blow fell. Horgan offered me the mother role.

Now, crying bitterly as I lay across my bed I remembered the snickers as I indignantly turned down the part.

Chuck came softly into the room and gathered me into his arms. "Sally, you mustn't feel bad because you didn't get the ingenue role," he murmured. "Don't break your heart trying to be a perennial debutante. There's no return to youth, my dear. We wouldn't want it that way."

For once Chuck's quiet common sense didn't comfort me. He was six years older than I. He was content to settle down, be middle-aged. But this was the day of youth. You saw them everywhere, slim young women beautifully groomed in positions of importance.

WHEN in the past, I'd be out with Chuck for a gala evening, I knew men's eyes followed me. Several times young men had attempted to pick me up. Properly indignant, I had told Chuck about it. But I got a kick out of it, all the same. I liked to be desirable and young.

I still was, I told myself rebelliously. I began to take an interest in make-up. Formerly I hadn't used very much—a dab of lipstick, perhaps. Now I experimented with eyeshadow, rouge and creams. I spent a long time every day working on my skin.

One day as I was cleaning Paula's room, I found a letter in the wastebasket from the soldier, Norris Axen. It was a reply to the one I had dictated. That night I asked Paula if she was keeping up the correspondence.

"No, I simply can't write letters," she said ruefully. "There's nothing interesting about me to write about."

Paula had never had a steady boy friend. She had a terrible inferiority complex, and didn't play up her good points. She pulled her brown hair back plainly, wore shirtwaist dresses just a trifle too long. Wistful and sweet, she lived vicariously on our happiness. At 22 she looked like an old maid. She thought me the luckiest woman in the world, for Chuck was her idol.

On an impulse I answered Norris Axen's letter. I didn't tell Paula or Chuck. I just wrote a cheerful chatty note, and signed it with Paula's name. After all, I thought, he wouldn't care who wrote just so long as he got a letter.

By return mail I got a reply. *Please keep writing,* he begged. *Your letters are wonderful.*

I posted my answer on my way to the Red Cross sewing class. I hadn't attended it since the fiasco at the tryouts two weeks before because I hadn't wanted to meet any of the cast.

I walked in, a bit late. Joan Slater was there, and came to meet me in her cordial way. "Sally, we've missed you! I was just about to call and see if you were sick—" she stopped, her good-humored face a study. I had just taken off my hat.

Work ceased in the big room. Everyone was staring covertly at my uncovered head. Then a babble of conversation rose and filled the room. No one said a word about the new color of my hair! They were treating me like a child who has done an embarrassing thing that is better ignored. Sewing machines hummed busily. The smell of fresh cut cloth seemed to suffocate me.

Joan chatted of this and that. I could hardly wait until it was time to go. When I left, I had made up my mind never to go again.

Joan followed me out, puffing to keep up with my angry tapping feet. "Where's the fire—what's the rush?" she asked good-naturedly.

I stopped short: "How come none of you mentioned I had dyed my hair! Is it a crime or something to try to look nice? I'm not ashamed of it."

"Don't snap my head off, Sally," she said with a little laugh. "Sure it's all right. That's what I told them before you came in—" She bit her lip in compunction.

I caught her up. "So you had to defend me with my own friends," I exploded. "Friends? I call them cats, talking about me behind my back."

"That's not true, and you know it," she said quickly. "We all feel you were hasty, though, running out on the Players just because Horgan asked you to play the mother part."

So they had sat in judgment on me. Infuriated, I lashed out: "Just because I curb my appetite and don't get fat and sloppy like the rest of you, you're all gunning for me. Well, I don't care!"

I saw her color rise, her black eyes sparkle with anger.

As I flounced down the street, I knew miserably I had just made an enemy of my best friend. I took a few more steps, then turned back. I couldn't leave Joan like that—I had been rotten mean. Joan and I had grown up together; our husbands worked in the same plant. I couldn't let her go like that!

"Joan!" I called, running back. "Wait, Joan." I called.

Maybe she didn't hear me—but she continued on and boarded a street car.

All right! I don't care. Be mad, I thought childishly. My head pounded and I felt dizzy and weak. The freak diet I was on left me hungry and irritable all the time.

When I came in Jill was at the table eating bread and milk. I grabbed her up, kissed her. "Jill, let's make some gingerbread."

She pressed her satin-freckled face against mine, champing on a mouthful of food. "I can't, Mommy. Marryanne is waiting. We're going to the park."

A few minutes later Peter rushed in, grabbed his bat, and dashed away again. The kids had their own interests; they didn't need me, I thought miserably. How empty the house was! All the work done; supper practically ready. I had nothing to do. I fished out Norris's last letter and read it again.

When our show closed, we had a big champagne supper, according to custom. Still in our make-up we sit around talking and planning for the next production. . . . .

A vision of that life rose before me. For the first time, I began to think of what might have been. If I hadn't married so young, I might have become a famous actress with my name in lights; glamor and fame might have been my lot instead of this. I looked about the living room. How small and ordinary it was, after all. Just like a million others. My heart contracted with regret and longing.

"Yoo-hoo!" came a voice at the back door. It was a slim young woman, a new neighbor. We had noticed a young couple had taken Smith's house two doors down the street.

"You look like a good sport. I was afraid to go to any of the others around here," she said flippantly, running an approving eye over me. "I was just going to wet my throat with a cold bottle of beer, and couldn't find an opener. How

about joining me—and bringing an opener."

When Chuck kissed me that evening, he drew back in mock alarm: "You been hitting liquor on the sly?" he teased.

"Just a glass of beer," I laughed excitedly. "I met our new neighbors—Edith Macquith. Chuck, she wants us to join their crowd and go to the Riverboat tonight. They're all from the east side, and sound like a lot of fun."

"Macquith? I wonder if her husband works in my department. There's a clerk in supply by that name," Paula said, setting the table.

"Yes, it's the same one. Do you know him?"

"I know he's been called on the carpet for being absent from work. Gets a hangover and doesn't show up on Mondays." Paula was disapproving.

I set my lips. She was getting more old-maidish every day.

"Anyway, we've got a date for gin rummy with the Slaters tonight," said Chuck.

"That's off. Joan and I had words," I said shortly.

Well, we went to the Riverboat, and I had a wonderful time. We danced until dawn. At least I did; Chuck gave out about midnight and spent the rest of the time dozing, but I went from partner to partner. They were a merry young bunch. I exulted that they considered me one of themselves. Carefully I avoided mention of Jill and Peter. It was so much fun being carefree this way!

"I'll be dead on my feet all day," Chuck groaned with a bone-cracking yawn. "I could never keep up with those kids, that's for sure!"

"Don't be such an old fogy!' I snapped.

Next day, still thrilling with the gaiety of the night before, I wrote to Norris Axen:

> *We were dancing on a houseboat moored in the river. The moon was our spotlight, and the wind was fresh and sweet in the darkness. Someone said I had stars caught in my eyes.*

Somehow I didn't think of Norris Axen as a real person. I thought of him as an audience, and I began to play a role for him, by letter. As I stood at the sink washing dishes, I was dreamily composing phrases for my next letter. Unconsciously I was creating an image—a laughing girl, always gay, having fun. I didn't realize this make believe girl might become dear and alive to a lonely soldier in camp.

I noticed a warmer tone creeping into his letters, but I thought he would be sent abroad soon, for he had said so several times. Anyway, he was an actor; it didn't mean anything.

I WAS seeing a lot of the Macquith crowd, now, and Edith was in and out of my kitchen a dozen times a day. She was a skinny young woman with nondescript hazel eyes, but I was flattered at the way she treated me like a contemporary. Edith wasn't much of a housekeeper. Her idea was to let the work pile up all week and then slam through it on Saturday. She could sleep all morning after a wild party, but of course I had to be on deck for breakfast, and Chuck hated to miss his regular sleep however. He doggedly followed my lead.

They were all heavy drinkers. I learned to sip at my drinks, or dump them out. I could have fun without the drinks, I thought. But was I having fun? Sometimes I wondered. It was an awful strain keeping up with this crowd; they never seemed to get tired. After being up half the night, I would be fagged and listless the next

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morning. I was having constant headaches, too, and tried all kinds of remedies to get rid of the pain.

I had a headache the day I went downtown with Edith. She was a great one for going through the stores, walking endlessly, while my back screamed a warning to rest.

"Do you know that woman over there—she's watching you," Edith pointed across the store. I saw it was Joan Slater's face.

"Hello, Sally," she said formally, as we came up alongside her, her eyes stern behind her glasses.

"Hello, Joan," I choked. I felt a sense of loss at seeing her move away without another word. We had always been so close.

Edith said, watching Joan go down the aisle: "Why do middle-aged women let themselves go like that? I'll say this for you—you certainly keep your figure."

She turned aside to look at something, but I was rooted to the floor. So I hadn't fooled Edith! To her I was just a middle-aged woman who had kept her figure! The store swam dizzily under the bright lights. Across the counter a woman with a haggard, ashen face like a skull, put out her hand to me. I tried to grasp it; my fingers touched a mirror. Suddenly everything got black. For the first time in my life, I fainted.

How good it felt to be tucked in bed that night with Chuck hovering tenderly over me, the kids bringing me burnt toast and weak tea! After my fainting spell, I had gone to the doctor. He scolded me severely for dieting. My blood count was way down, and I had a case of the flu. He ordered me to go right to bed, eat substantial food, and above all, rest!

"But what about my housework, doctor? It's impossible to get a hired girl."

"Get your neighbor to run in! This is war time, and we should all help one another!"

I told Chuck and Paula to go along to work, I'd make out fine. "Edith always drops in for a cup of coffee later. I know she'll clean up the dishes and get lunch for the kids."

Edith did drop in for a chat. She fidgeted a minute or two, smoking a cigarette beside my bed, then jumped up: "Got a date," she said with ill-concealed boredom. "I have to get dressed. So long."

She went through the untidy bedroom where I was lying, through the kitchen where the breakfast dishes sat on the table, and left me flat. I began to toss and turn, unable to rest. The children were over at the park playing but they'd be in for lunch soon. I'd just have to get up, that was all. The dizziness returned when I stood up. Then I heard someone in the kitchen, rattling the dishes. A moment later, Joan Slater's broad form, clad in a fresh apron, bulked in the doorway.

"You get back to bed, lady," she commanded. "Just tell me where you keep your soap chips, and then go back to sleep. I'll take over until you're well again."

I began to cry weakly as she put me back to bed. "Thank you, Joan, for coming over. You're grand to do it. . . ."

"Fiddle-dee-dee!" she said in her warm contralto voice. "Didn't you come to the rescue when the kids and I were down with the mumps. You were helpful even if you did make me eggnog with salt instead of sugar—remember?" she laughed heartily.

Tears gave way to laughter, "And you were so polite, you drank it without telling me until later?" I caught at her capable hand, and I whispered: "Joan, I'm sorry, I've been such a fool lately!"

"Every woman's entitled to be a fool once in her life, and I know it's all over now," she added gently.

I was sitting up in the sunshine when I got Norris Axen's next letter. I read it, shocked and ashamed. It was a love letter; I couldn't deny it.

"You have become so dear to me. I keep your letters with me, read them over and over. I hate the men who have you in their arms, dancing with you. I can't bear the thought of going into battle, never coming back, maybe. Sometimes I wonder if life is worth living if I don't see you. Dearest, I love you. Every night I dream of you—

Remorse and shame swept over me like feverish chills. Too late I cursed the impulse that had made me write to him as I did. I hadn't realized this might happen. I hadn't realized what my letters might mean to a lonely boy in camp. I had just been playing a part. It had seemed so harmless! Now I saw what they had done.

And if Chuck ever found out. . . .

I'd have to write him, tell him the truth. That I was married, happily married, and had two children and was only using Paula's name. I tried to write him the truth but the words wouldn't come. I decided I'd try to write tomorrow.

Although I was still weak, I was up, now, and Joan was back in her own home. I struggled through the morning work, next day, not even taking time to dress or put on make-up. When the doorbell rang, I dragged myself to the door to answer.

"Could I speak to Miss Winfield," asked a voice. Dazzled by the morning sun, I saw that it was a man; a delivery boy, I thought. "I'm Miss Winfield," I said without thinking. Then sweat broke out all over my body. My eyes, adjusting to the light, saw it was a soldier, standing there He looked at me, then took out a letter—one of my letters—as if checking the address. "It's Paula Winfield, I want to see," he said hesitantly. "Your daughter, I guess."

I knew I looked bad but that he should think Paula could be my daughter! I was stunned!

"Come in," I moved aside to admit him. My mind was spinning with resentment and nervous apprehension. He mustn't find out the truth. Norris Axen here at River Point—looking for someone who didn't exist! A Paula whom I had built

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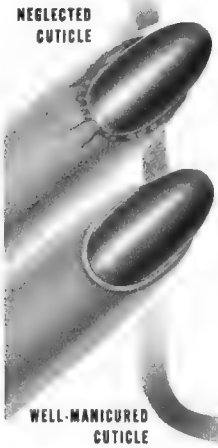

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up in my imagination. He stood in the living room, tall, relaxed in his uniform. He couldn't have been more than 23 years old! Somehow I had thought of him as older—about 28 or 29. He was tall and husky, but he had a thin intense face with full, firm lips. His eyes were blue and earnest.

"She doesn't know I'm coming," he said with restrained eagerness. "I'm surprising her. . . . Your daughter, I mean." I twitched as if a whip had flicked me.

"I haven't got a grown-up daughter," I said tartly. "You—you must mean my sister-in-law, Paula. She isn't home. She's at work."

"Yes, of course," he grinned. "I wonder if I could see her at work; take her to lunch or something. You see, I just wangled leave, and jumped on the train without wiring her, and I'm so anxious—"

"No!" I cried. "No, it isn't possible to see her at work."

"Then I'll call back tonight. Tell her Norris Axen is in town."

I leaned against the screen door, watching him go. This was the time to tell him. I should call him back—But I couldn't do it. What should I do now? How could I tell this boy who was ready to lay his life down for an ideal, that he had been deceived by a woman who had used this vicarious romance to hold onto youth.

I had to do something! I went to the telephone, called Paula. "You've got to come home right away—please, Paula, right away," I cried incoherently.

She thought I'd had a relapse. She was there in half an hour.

I told her the whole miserable story. I had to. I told her what I'd written, and showed her Norris's last letter. I told her he was in town, and he was coming back. "You'll have to pretend you wrote those letters—it's the only way out!" I said feverishly.

SCORN and anger quivered in her quiet voice. "What a contemptible thing to do! You, with everything in the world to make you happy—a fine husband, two lovely children, a nice home. And making another man fall in love with you—I should think you'd be ashamed!"

I couldn't offer a word in my defense. She went on, swiftly, cheeks pink with anger: "You've made my brother a laughing stock with your dyed hair, your skimpy schoolgirl dresses! You've made him run around at night when he needed his sleep! You don't deserve him, with your eternal pursuit of youth! And then to use *my* name to carry on a love-making correspondence! Why—why it's outrageous!"

"All right," I said heavily, "I didn't tell Norris the truth because I didn't want to disillusion him, but if you think I should tell him and Chuck, too, I will. I only want to do the right thing."

That brought her up sharply. "You're not going to spoil Chuck's faith in you, either," she said. "All right, I'll pretend I wrote the letters and keep up the deception until he goes. Although—" she added grimly, "you've created such a glamor girl from what you've told me, that he's going to get a terrible jolt anyway, when he sees me."

"Not if you'll let me fix you up a bit," I pleaded. "Leave off your glasses—you don't need to wear them all the time. Let me set your hair. I've always wanted to part it in the middle, and put a soft wave on either side. And you can wear my new suit. . . ."

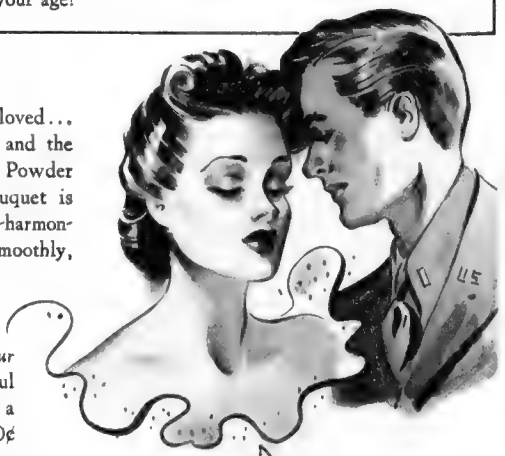
Chuck was tickled when I told him Paula had been corresponding with a soldier and he was coming to call that

The Girl who never was 21

1 Poor girl! She completely skipped the best years of her life... the romantic years...'cause she never gave her natural youth and beauty a chance to bloom! And she was oh, so lonely! 'Twas all her face powder's fault... for its shade was dead and lifeless... and added years to her age! How sad...

2 But then, smart girl, she tried Cashmere Bouquet Face Powder... in the glamorous new *youthful* shades... that are matched to the vibrant, glowing skin tones of youth! What a difference! And what a discovery for *you*...for there's an alluring new shade of Cashmere Bouquet to enhance the natural, youthful coloring of *your* complexion, too...no matter what your age!

3 And now she's young again...and loved... thanks to that smooth, downy look and the color of youth that Cashmere Bouquet Powder gives her! And this new Cashmere Bouquet is always color-true, never streaky...color-harmonized to suit your skin-type...goes on smoothly, stays on smoothly, for hours!



4 Discover the young glamour of *your* complexion with these new youthful shades of Cashmere Bouquet! There's a shade that's perfect for you...in 10¢ size or larger, at all cosmetic counters.

CASHMERE BOUQUET FACE POWDER

In the New Youthful Shades

3 Main Deodorant Troubles-

Which Is Yours?

"ARMPIT PIMPLES?"

(Due to irritating chemicals)

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CREAM GOES GRAINY?

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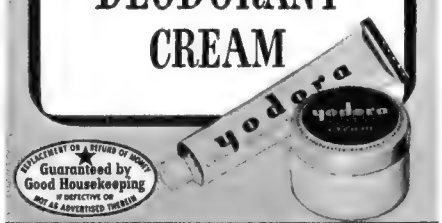
TOO STIFF TO SPREAD?

Such creams are outmoded forever by Yodora. Soft, delicate, exquisite—Yodora feels like whipped cream. And you get effective, *powerful protection.*

Frankly, we believe you won't even finish your present supply of deodorant, once you try radically different Yodora. Try it! In tubes or jars, 10¢, 30¢, 60¢. McKesson & Robbins, Inc., Bridgeport, Conn.

YODORA

DEODORANT CREAM



"AND McKESSON MAKES IT"

night. When she came down after I had put the finishing touches to her, he almost jumped with surprise.

"Sis, you look like a million dollars," he beamed with honest approval. "I didn't realize you could be such a beauty. You should fix yourself up like that all the time!"

Paula's nervous tenseness relaxed somewhat with his words. I myself was astonished at the results of a more becoming make-up and hairdo. Paula's eyes were shy and soft; her lips tremulous and red. Her face with the Madonna waves framing it was a slender oval.

But best of all, she was young, and untouched and sweet.

Norris thought so, too. His blue eyes devoured her. First thing he said, "You look different than I had imagined—but somehow I like you better as you are."

I could see Paula was taken by his appearance, too. She was absolutely tongue-tied with embarrassment, and the two of them sat there dumbly. Scared to death she'd throw the whole thing to the winds, I began to talk feverishly, saying anything that came into my head, filling the silence. I cracked jokes, then laughed at them. Chuck frowned at me several times. He didn't like it. And still Paula sat tongue-tied.

Suddenly Paula got to her feet. My heart was in my mouth for I was afraid she wasn't going through with it. But she merely said to Norris, who sat uneasily moving his cap around in his fingers: "Would you like to walk around town? I'll point out all the sights. There's a very pretty view from the bluffs on the river."

"I'd love to!" He jumped up with such alacrity that Chuck said, after they'd gone: "He's pretty smitten, that's plain!"

But I wondered uneasily what would come of all this.

Norris and Paula were together constantly. Two days before he was to go, Paula came to me as we were preparing to go to bed. "Norris wants me to marry him—go back to camp with him. He's going into officers training and he says we would have six months before he goes overseas."

She looked so woebegone that the words of congratulation died on my lips. I put my arms about her, but she shoved me away. "It's not really me he's in love with," she quavered. "It's you—or rather the image of you created in my name. He would never have looked at me if you hadn't already made him in love. He's just transferred that love to me. He's really in love with the girl in the letters!"

"No, no, you're wrong, Paula," I said earnestly. "You fell in love with him and he fell in love with you—just exactly the same way. The letters had nothing to do with it. Please believe me!"

"Do you think I could marry Norris, deceiving him like that?" she cried in angry amazement. "Oh, don't worry, I won't tell him. Your precious little lies are safe with me."

"Then what are you going to do?"

She turned her back to me. "I'll refuse him. I'll have to tell him I can't marry him."

Norris Axen was coming at eight the next evening. I had been in a sick, worried daze all day. But it wasn't for myself I was worried. For the first time in my life I was totally and completely occupied with someone beside myself. I was thinking about Paula. Rather than shame me in Chuck's eyes, she was going to give up the man she loved. She was sending him away—perhaps never to see him again. I knew her heart was breaking. . . .

I had to do something!

Paula and Norris were just going out

THE ARMY OF THE HANDICAPPED

THERE are at least 2,000,000 men and women throughout the country who are handicapped by physical defects who are finding their places in the war program and are being made aware of their importance and value as workers.

A former army sergeant who lost an arm at Pearl Harbor is inspecting weapons for his two-armed pals in a munitions plant. And you can bet he's doing a good job! A blind girl in West New York sorts mica strips for war planes, detecting differences of 3½ thousandths of an inch in thickness! She's even doing it fifteen times faster than the normal worker she replaced.

There's a place in almost every plant where some operations can be handled by the blind, lame, deaf, or aged. A Chicago metal concern employed five deaf mutes to work in a room where the use of the noisy, ear-splitting air hammer had worn out normal workers. A Hartford plant hired a paralyzed man who could use a blow torch, and a man blind in one eye to cut up and stack parts of an auto chassis.

The story of the physically handicapped marching to do their bit in the war effort is an inspiring picture. Many of these people who never had a chance are now able to prove their value because of the manpower shortage. Their ambitious spirit serves as an example for all of us called upon to help in this united war effort.

One of the functions of the United States Employment Service is to find jobs for these handicapped persons. Rehabilitation and training are done by local offices of the Vocational Rehabilitation Division of the U. S. Office of Education, in cooperation with state and community Departments of Education. If you know of any handicapped person or you yourself have felt that some physical defect has been keeping you from doing your part, why don't you go to the U. S. Employment Service and find out how you can help win the war!

when I came down to the living room.

"Norris, before you go, I've got to tell you something," I said abruptly.

Paula's creamy skin grew pink, her eyes darkened. "No, Sally, we're in a hurry, I won't let you. . . ."

I paid no attention to her. "Norris, I've got to tell you the truth. I wrote you those letters. I did it for a lark—no, not a lark, exactly—" How wretchedly I was putting it, but I plunged on. "Anyway, I corresponded with you all these months. I'm telling you this because Paula won't. And I think you should know."

There was a little silence. Paula was intently watching her fingers pinch up bits of her filmy dress. Chuck was staring at me in frank astonishment.

"All right," Norris said expectantly. "I'll bite. What's the gag?"

"It's no gag," I assured him wearily. "I wrote those letters, and now Paula won't marry you because she thinks it wouldn't be right, your not knowing. That's all."

"You wrote me those letters?" Norris asked incredulously. "But I don't get it. Why should a woman your age want to write a kid like me? All that romantic stuff about dancing, and stars in your eyes!" Comprehension seemed to dawn on him all at once. He seemed poised between conflicting emotions. Then he burst into a ringing laugh.

Finally he said apologetically, "I'm sorry, Mrs. Winfield, but honestly, the idea is so utterly—utterly—" and he began to laugh again.

I had been ready for indignation, hurt, anger—anything but laughter. I felt cut to shreds. I ran, stumbling up the stairs, to get away from that sound.

I was sitting dry-eyed by the window, watching Norris and Paula go down the twilight-purpled streets, their arms locked, when Chuck came in. I flinched at his approach, but he lifted me from the chair, sat down and took me in his arms.

"Go on and cry, Sally, you'll feel better," he said gently. "I'm not mad at you. You've been punished enough."

Pressing my hot face against his clean-smelling shoulder, I mumbled, "Will it be all right with Paula? Are they going to get married?"

"Yes, tomorrow. He's going down town to wire to see if he can get an extension on his leave. Otherwise she'll go back to camp with him when he goes," said Chuck.

"Thank God for her happiness," I whispered.

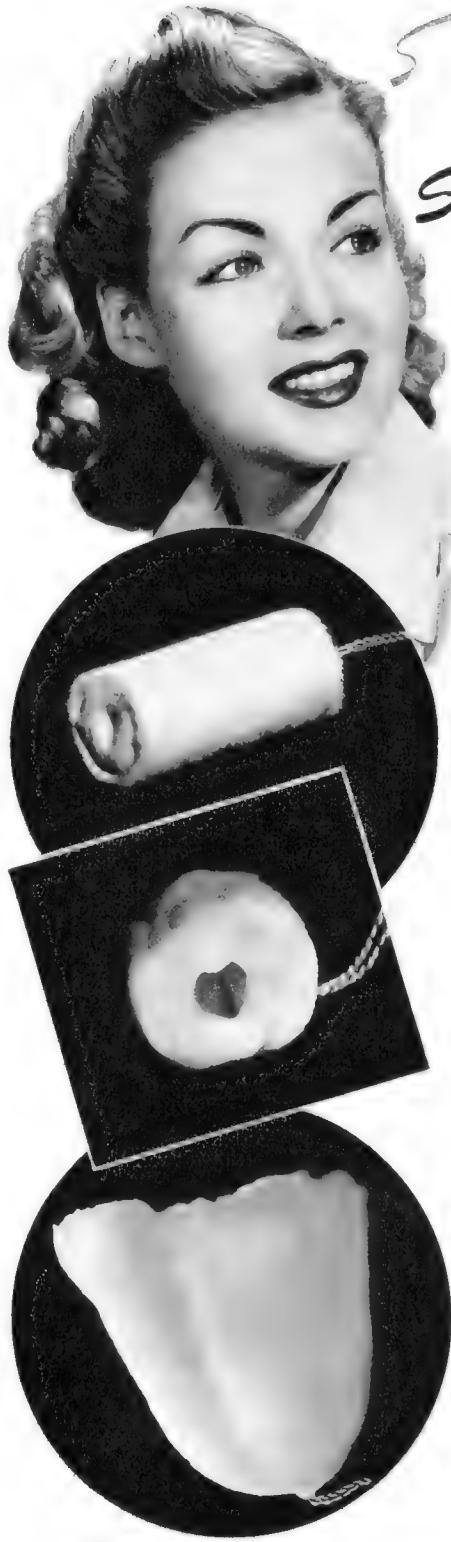
After awhile, gently, but with deep seriousness, Chuck talked to me. "Sally, you're a sweet vital person when you act your age, but made up like a youngster, you're—well to tell the truth, you're hard and brassy-looking. It just doesn't become you, honey! I don't like it, and the kids don't like it. They want their mother to be interested in them—not her looks. They don't care if you've got lines in your face if you've got love in your eyes for them. And that goes for me too, dearest. To me you'll always look exactly like you looked as a bride. Try and remember that, honey, will you?"

As I turned my lips for his kiss, tears rolled down my cheeks, soft and healing as rain.

"I'll never forget it again, my dearest." I whispered with all my heart.

♥ ♥ ♥ ♥

Order Your October TRUE CONFESSIONS Early



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This tiny Meds insorber

This photograph—*actual size*—shows you the Meds **insorber**—tiny, easy-to-use. It's quickly and correctly placed with its own individual applicator.

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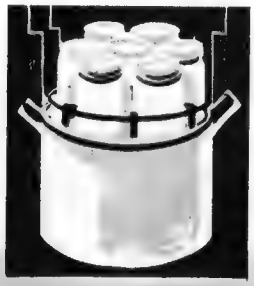
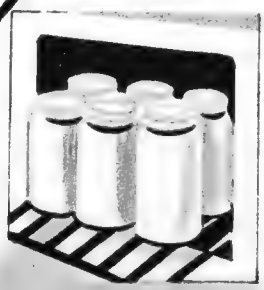
TWO TYPES
HOMOGENIZED LIQUID and CREAM

ARMAND

A-Canning We



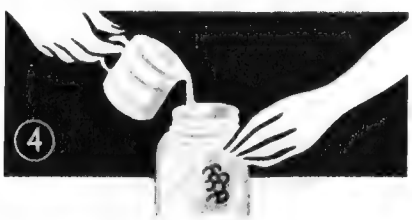


A canning we will go, using either pressure cooker, hot water bath or oven methods. Regardless of which of these three processing methods you use (with open kettle too), carefully follow the six basic steps illustrated below.

Examine every jar carefully for nicks, cracks, and sharp edges. Use only perfect ones. After washing in hot soapy water scald for 15 minutes in clear boiling water.

Select only fresh, firm (not overly ripe) produce for canning. Grade according to size and ripeness, being careful to can like products in the same jar.

After preparing vegetables according to a reliable recipe, pack into sterilized jars to within a half inch of top; corn, peas, limas and meats go to an inch of top.



Fill only one jar at a time with liquid called for in a reliably tested recipe. Vegetables usually take water to within half inch of top. Then add salt and seasonings.

Scalded lids should now be placed on jars. Shown here is a self-sealing lid with screwband. Screwbands may be removed after 24 hours and used over.

After processing, set jars on layers of cloth to cool, away from drafts. Test for seal by tapping lid gently with spoon. Clear, ringing note means a perfect seal.

Will Go

Thou shalt not waste is the commandment every home canner must follow this year. For unless we do, we will be defeating our very purpose.

Thou shalt not waste means simply this: *Never guess and never take shortcuts.* Follow reliably tested recipes and timetables, and follow them to the letter.

The six easy steps sketched for you at the left should help you organize your plans in advance. They illustrate the points you should remember throughout the process of putting up fruits or vegetables. Regardless of which of the three illustrated canning methods you use, the six basic steps remain the same, right up to the actual processing of the foods.

Which processing method to use depends upon what you are going to can. Pressure cookers are scarce, but as we go to press, WPB has allocated 275,000 for the use of home canners. Although this number is large there are still not enough pressure cookers to go around, so if you must have the use of one, try to borrow one from a neighbor. If this fails, seek the assistance of the home demonstration representative from your county who can advise you.

You will not need a pressure cooker unless you are planning to put up non-acid foods: *beans, peas, corn, spinach, other greens, asparagus* and *meats.* The Department of Agriculture does not recommend that you attempt any method other than pressure canning for putting up these foods.

On the other hand, there are many important and universally liked acid products: *fruits, tomatoes, rhubarb, pickled beets* and the like that can be canned without a pressure cooker. These can be safely put up by the boiling water bath. But here again, follow the methods recommended in tested recipes.

Knowing approximately how many jars of home canned foods you can expect from the quantity of produce you start out with is of tremendous help in planning time and equipment. For this reason, we have worked out a guide for you on page 60, that will help eliminate guesswork. Of course, these quantities are approximate, because the size of produce can vary slightly. But, most of the arithmetic has been done for you in this simple, easy to follow guide. So whether you plan to can in terms of bushels or just three or four quarts, why not let this guide on page 60 help you be accurate?

YOUR GUIDE TO HOMEMAKING

PAULINE RAWLEY, DIRECTOR

The famous 3-WAY Glover's Treatment

Many Hollywood stars confirm the opinion of Americans by the hundreds of thousands — three generations of men and women who have used Glover's famous Mange Medicine for the Scalp and Hair. And now . . . Glo-Ver Beauty Soap Shampoo and Glover's Imperial Hair Dress complete this tried-and-true Glover's treatment. Try all three — ask at your favorite Drug Store — or mail the coupon today!

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A-Canning We Will Go

Guide to approximately how many jars of home-canned foods you can expect from specific quantities of produce.

APPLES	*1 bu. (50 lbs.) will can 20 qts.* *2½ lbs. (7 to 8 apples) will can about 1 qt.*
BEANS, LIMA	*1 bu. (28 lbs.) will can 6 to 8 qts.* *4 to 5 lbs. will can about 1 qt.*
BEANS, SNAP	*1 bu. (24 lbs.) will can 16 qts.* *1½ lbs. will can about 1 qt.*
BEETS	*1 bu. (60 lbs.) will can 24 qts.* *2½ lbs. will can about 1 qt.*
BERRIES	*24-qt. crate will can 18 qts.* *1¼ to 1½ lbs. (5 cups) will can about 1 qt.*
CARROTS	*1 bu. (50 lbs.) will can 20 qts.* *2½ lbs. will can about 1 qt.*
CHERRIES	*1 bu. (56 lbs.) will can 25 qts.* *1½ to 2½ lbs. (6 to 8 cups) will can about 1 qt.*
CORN	*1 bu. (72 lbs.) will can 8 to 9 qts.* *Whole kernel—6 to 10 ears will can about 1 qt.*
GRAPES	*1 bu. (48 lbs.) will can 20 qts.* *2½ lbs. will can about 1 qt.*
GREENS	*1 bu. (12 lbs.) will can 5 to 7 qts.* *1½ to 2½ lbs. will can about 1 qt.*
PEACHES	*1 bu. (50 lbs.) will can 20 qts.* *2 to 2½ lbs. (8 to 10 peaches) will can about 1 qt.*
PEARS	*1 bu. (58 lbs.) will can 24 qts.* *2 to 2½ lbs. (5 to 6 pears) will can about 1 qt.*
PEAS	*1 bu. (32 lbs.) will can 12 to 16 qts.* *2 to 2½ lbs. will can about 1 pt.*
PLUMS	*1 bu. (56 lbs.) will can 30 qts.* *1½ to 2 lbs. (24 to 32 plums) will can about 1 qt.*
SQUASH	*1 bu. (40 lbs.) will can 20 qts.* *2 lbs. will can about 1 qt.*
STRAWBERRIES	*24-qt. crate will can 12 qts.* *2 qts. will can about 1 qt.*
SWEET POTATOES	*1 bu. (52 lbs.) will can 20 qts.* *2½ to 3 lbs. will can about 1 qt.*
TOMATOES	*1 bu. (56 lbs.) will can 15 qts.* *2½ to 3½ lbs. (8 to 10 tomatoes) will can about 1 qt.*

FREE

Even a beginner can turn Victory Garden vegetables into products to enjoy all winter long, if simple instructions are followed.

Send today for your FREE copies of Home Canning Guide and 12 Short Lessons in Home Canning. These two valuable booklets will tell you what you need to know to put up fruits, vegetables and meats successfully.

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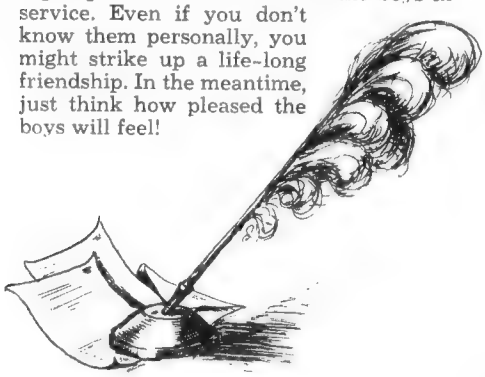
(This offer expires October 15, 1943)

MAIL FOR MORALE

A GROUP of women in one of the large New York churches hit upon an idea that would bring additional mail to our boys who clamor and yearn for mail. They collected the name of every boy from their church who was in the service and then they divided up the names so that each woman would have about four or five names, or even more. Then once a week they sit down and write letters to those boys, telling them what happened to John, whom he undoubtedly knew from church. They write that Alice Smith was married on Sunday to a lieutenant in the Army. And last but not least the latest information and scores on the National and American league baseball teams is always included. The result is a newsy letter that will bring a smile to the face of any of our fighting boys.

An extremely large apartment house has also taken up the idea and the letters they have gotten in answer have indeed rewarded their efforts.

Whether you live in a large city or in a small community why don't you organize a group of women to write to the boys in service. Even if you don't know them personally, you might strike up a life-long friendship. In the meantime, just think how pleased the boys will feel!



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*BIKE TESTS prove Etiquet over 24% more effective against under-arm perspiration odor than other deodorant creams tested. Details sent upon request.

Guaranteed by Good Housekeeping

- SAFELY STOPS under-arm perspiration 1 to 3 days. No moisture stains on dresses.
- SAFELY STOPS under-arm perspiration *odor* 1 to 3 days. 24% more effective than other deodorant creams tested.*
- SAVES CLOTHES. Prevents clothes-stains, clothes-rot due to under-arm perspiration.
- ANTISEPTIC. Pure. Soothing. Not irritating to normal skin. Safe to use every day.
- WORKS FAST. No need to rinse off.

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Etiquet

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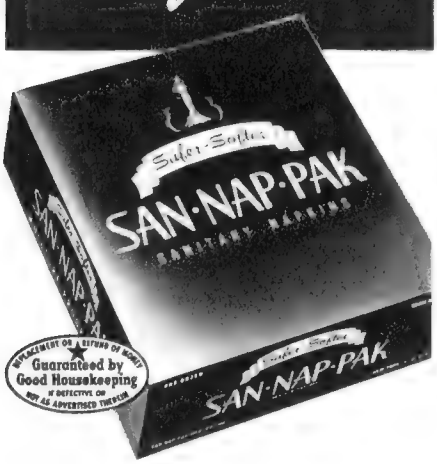
USE FEWER SANITARY PADS...YET *be Fresher, Safer!*



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A BETTER SANITARY NAPKIN *yet actually costs less!*

Can I Reform a Periodic

Anxiously I'd wait. Was this another night when Bob wouldn't come home?

PERHAPS some of you readers have faced a problem like mine. If you have, perhaps you can help me find a solution to my problem. I'm in desperate need of advice. Bob's people are sympathetic with his side and of course my parents sympathize with me. What I need is unbiased advice from strangers. At present I am so mixed up in my mind that I cannot think straight. I'm not sure which is the right course to take but above all I want to be fair. Fair to my husband, my child and myself.

Bob is thirty-one years of age and I am four years his junior. We have been married four years and have a darling little son, not yet two years old.

Bob is a defense worker, an expert in his line and that must be the reason why he literally gets away with murder. You see Bob seems to be a periodic drinker. I never knew he had this habit until I was married a week or so. I had seen him drinking at parties, but never, never did I dream it was an unbreakable habit. I thought at first married life would change him; later I thought surely giving him a child would be the incentive to straighten him out. I was wrong on both counts. It seemed nothing would change him. It was heartbreaking. Once he had the craving for liquor all his responsibilities were forgotten. If he didn't have the money to buy it, he was mean and nasty. Several times things became so bad I went home to my mother. Each time he came and begged me on his bended knees to come back to him. Each time he promised to reform and I believed him, he sounded so sincere. My mother never sympathized with me, not wishing to intrude on our marriage. Bob's parents didn't even know I had left him, as he stayed in our apartment.

The last time I went back to him for the baby's sake. I was determined to make a go of it. I tried desperately hard. I was patient and forgiving when he came home drunk again and again. I'd get him sobered up and send him off to work each time. The next night I'd have a tasty supper prepared but we never enjoyed it together. Quarter to eight I'd still be wringing my hands before the kitchen clock while Bob stayed all day and night in the local bar. Then he developed another bad habit—laziness. He'd lie in bed in the mornings. He'd lounge around the house day after day. He was not only letting me down but the baby and his country as well. He'd work one week and lie around two. The result was that our rent and other obligations were piling into a mountain of debt. When he did work, he spent a great deal of his pay on liquor. At times, I'm sorry to admit, food was even scarce and I had to borrow a few dollars from a neighbor to buy milk for the baby. Conditions were intolerable and seemed so unnecessary when

Drinker?

Bob had the opportunity to earn $125.00 per week! The baby was not picking up the way a baby should. I didn't even have the money to seek advice from a doctor. I, myself, was so run down from worry, I was on the verge of a nervous collapse. At last came the breaking point. Bob had earned a week's salary and I planned on doing many things with it. Foolishly, I didn't plan on what Bob would do. He got drunk as usual, stayed away for two days and when he did come home just gave me a few dollars for food. He offered no excuses about anything. I knew I had to make some kind of a decision, so while he was in a drunken slumber I packed our things and taking the baby asked a friend to take me to my mother's home. This time she was all sympathy and urged me to leave Bob permanently. Mother took the baby and me to a doctor who prescribed for both of us. Next I went to see a lawyer. When I asked him for a legal separation, he questioned me. After he heard my story he urged a divorce as the only solution. I started proceedings for a divorce action. That was two months ago. I hesitated at first, thinking Bob would be eligible for the draft with our dependency removed. I thought military life would be the thing to straighten him out. But after he took his physical examination, he was deferred permanently because of a slight physical defect. When that avenue of solution was closed to me there seemed nothing else to do but get a divorce. I am now working and earning an ample salary to take care of the baby and myself.

Now a new problem has arisen. Bob and his people harass me constantly to give him another chance. His mother says he has settled all the debts and also started a bank account. His parents seem to think I am the one at fault. They seem to think I walked out on him leaving him to pay the debts. They cannot believe their son was as bad as I truthfully told them. They argue that if he could behave himself as long as he did while living with them, I should have no complaints. Of course, they are judging him by his present behavior. Bob's parents insist that in spite of his weakness he deserves another chance. They don't know how many chances I've already given him. Bob's parents never suspected his fondness for liquor while he was single but that is understandable. He has [*Please turn to page* 66]

A PROBLEM STORY

PRIZES FOR YOUR LETTERS—SEE PAGE 11

Spell "IT" to the Marine

With Your Evening in Paris Make-up

The marines *love* trouble . . . and this exquisite make-up, perfumed with the Fragrance of Romance, can spell heart-trouble in any man's language!

Evening in Paris face powder to create a misty veil of beauty . . . delicate flush of feathery rouge . . . bright accent of Evening in Paris lipstick . . . surely this is a loveliness combination to storm the heart of the most devil-may-care hero!

Face Powder, $1.00 • **Lipstick,** 50c • **Rouge,** 50c • **Perfume,** $1.25 to $10.00.
(All prices plus tax)

Evening in Paris

Distributed by

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Listen to the new Bourjois radio show, "Here's to Romance" with David Broekman's orchestra, the songs of Dick Haymes and Jim Ameche as Master of Ceremonies, Sundays over the Blue Network.

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Cream Deodorant
safely
Stops Perspiration

1. Does not harm dresses, or men's shirts. Does not irritate skin.
2. No waiting to dry. Can be used right after shaving.
3. Safely stops perspiration for 1 to 3 days. Removes odor from perspiration, keeps armpits dry.
4. A pure white, greaseless, stainless vanishing cream.
5. Arrid has been awarded the Seal of Approval of the American Institute of Laundering, for being harmless to fabrics. Use Arrid regularly.

ARRID
39¢ a jar
(Also in 10¢ and 59¢ jars)
At any store which sells toilet goods

There's Romance in Hair that is Truly BLONDE!

• Hair that gleams and glistens like a halo of spun gold...bright, light, *exquisitely lovely!* What man can resist it? What blonde doesn't long for it?

With the help of Marchand's Golden Hair Wash, such hair may be *yours!* When you see what stunning effects you can get, you'll be thrilled. For, with Marchand's you yourself can control the actual *degree* of lightness you desire!

If you are a brunette or a redhead, use Marchand's Golden Hair Wash to get more lightness into your hair! Not a dye—not an expensive "treatment"—it's easy to apply!

Wonderful, also, for lightening hair on arms and legs... At all drug counters.

MARCHAND'S GOLDEN HAIR WASH
Made by the Makers of Marchand's "Make-Up" Hair Rinse

Calling All Mothers

[CONTINUED FROM PAGE 41]

stage and we are still wondering about the little ones.

They learn very largely (and this is a thing that we tend to forget) from the right things they do as well as the wrong things. A lot of misbehavior on the part of young children is what we call "attention-getting." Our little ones are much smarter than we give them credit for being. At a tender age they find out that you are much more interested in them if they are bad, if they scream and kick, throw things, or just plain refuse to obey.

THE other day as I was waiting for a bus, I watched a mother with her two little children who happened to be waiting, too. She had a little girl of about 2½ and a little boy of about 5. The boy was a bright looking, lively youngster, interested in everything that was going on about him, and at first he seemed to be very well-behaved. The mother noticed that the little girl's shoe lace was untied and she said, without any politeness whatever, "Tie Peggy's shoe." The boy did so and his mother didn't even watch him or praise him or say "thank you." I wondered how she had such good children when she had no manners whatever. A few minutes later he put one foot off the curb, onto the street, and looked back at his mother as if challenging her. You could tell by looking at him that he had been forbidden to step off the sidewalk and that he was deliberately teasing his mother. She reacted just as he expected. She was furious. She grabbed hold of his arm and pulled him back. She said, "If you do that again, I'll spank you." And she gave him a long and excited lecture on how bad he was.

You see, she had paid no attention to him when he was good but now when he was naughty, she was all his. No wonder he deliberately thought up things like that to get his mother's attention. How much simpler it would have been if she had praised him for tying his little sister's shoe so nicely, if she had talked with enthusiasm about something that interested him—the few remaining cars on the street, the airplane overhead. That would not only have been simpler but far pleasanter. After all, we want to enjoy living with our children and we want our children to enjoy living with us.

Life would be more enjoyable, for ourselves as well as our children, if we kept in mind the fact that praise can do more good than blame, that friendly conversations develop character and personality more than scoldings. Life with our children would also be pleasanter if we bore in mind what I said before, that no lesson is ever learned once and for all, that slowly, day by day children grow and develop and learn how to get along in the baffling world about them. If we accept that fact, we can sit back and relax a little. We won't try to make every incident the occasion for teaching a great moral lesson.

Here are some questions from mothers that are typical of the letters I received this month. I hope that by reading the answers to them, you will gain some help for your own personal problem.

I have a year and a half old boy. I put him to bed at night between 6 and 8 o'clock and I can't get him to lie down. He keeps getting up in bed. It isn't that he's mean about it but he thinks it's funny. I can find no way to make him lie down and go to sleep unless I stand by the crib and hold him down until he's asleep. I don't know where I've failed in disciplining my baby as I try to do the right thing. Have you any suggestions?

My first suggestion is that you get rid of the feeling that you have failed, that if you had done the right thing for your child he would now be a perfect little angel. For mothers who have this same feeling of having done something wrong, the case of the Dionne Quintuplets should be very comforting. The Quins, as you know, had the very best in care and training. They had nurses who were well-trained, who didn't spoil the children, and who weren't pressed for time or over-tired the way most mothers are a good deal of the time. So theoretically the five little girls should have been good and obedient all day long.

At first their behavior was very promising. They were used to their routine and life went along very smoothly. Then, when they were between 1 and 2 years old, though they had been going to sleep at the right time every night, they all stood up in their cribs when they were supposed to lie down. They suddenly discovered that it was more fun to stand up than to lie down. It was more exciting and they were afraid that they might miss something if they went to sleep.

You can put your conscience to rest when you realize that such behavior is normal. But you still want to know how to get your baby to sleep. Of course, each case is a little bit different from every other so I won't be able to tell you exactly what to do. I can only make some suggestions.

In the first place, I think that your baby's bedtime is too indefinite. It is ridiculous to be too strict about bedtime, to say that it must come at exactly six-thirty every night. On the other hand, I think you should try to plan your day so that it comes at about the same time every night. If the baby stays up till 8 one night, it will be harder to get him to sleep at 6 the next. He won't be as tired for one thing and with so much difference in the time he will sense that it is earlier and perhaps even notice that it is lighter outside. If he refuses to go to sleep at 6 and you let him stay up until 8 your task will be much harder the next night.

The most difficult thing in putting a child to bed is to get him tired enough to want to sleep, and yet not over-tired which will make him over-excited. Each mother has to work that out for herself. She mustn't do much roughhousing with Daddy this hour before bedtime. Some mothers have discoverd that half an hour of play in the fresh air makes their children sleepy and yet not over-excited.

The second thing to remember is that the change from playtime to bedtime mustn't be too sudden. A child can't be expected to jump straight from an exciting game of roughhouse to a sleepy mood. That's why there must be a little quiet time before the actual bedtime. With older children, there must be a gentle warning that in five minutes or ten minutes it will be time for bed. The process of getting ready for bed is sometimes enough for a bridge between playtime and bedtime. Make this process as pleasant as possible so that bedtime won't be a hateful thing. Give the child plenty

of time for brushing his teeth, for saying his prayers, for the evening story if he has one, and the good night kiss and hug. Leave your child gently, not hurriedly. Then, even with all that care, you have to remember that your child will not *want* to be left alone to go to sleep. He will learn eventually that he has to, but this is not an easy lesson to learn.

The best approach is to make the first going-to-bed, "official"—as pleasant and friendly as possible. Nice conversation about the washing, the toothbrushing, and so forth, happy talk about the good time we are going to have tomorrow, the feeling that mother is not in a great hurry and that for this time she is all his. Then, when the child still gets up (and he probably will) the next going-to-bed must be entirely different. The mother must not be upset or excited because that, in its own way, gives the child just as much fun. But she *must* be in control of the situation. She must calmly put him back to bed, without the fuss and conversation and attention this time, but also without hysteria. She mustn't beg the child to go to sleep, but just let him know that he will go to sleep—now or later—and that it might as well be now because there's not going to be any fun or excitement in the meantime and he will get no extra attention by protesting.

Another trick to remember is to keep the child from asking for things by giving them to him in advance. Give him his favorite teddy bear at the official putting-to-bed. Leave a drink of water by his bed if he is old enough to drink out of a glass without spilling. After that, let him understand that you will run no more errands. It isn't necessary to be unpleasant, just firm.

I have a very hard time trying to make my little boy of 5 obey me when I call him to come in and get ready for meals. I also have an especially hard time in keeping him from throwing things at other children and at cars.

Children do not naturally obey. It is much easier for them not to. Whether or not they learn to obey depends almost entirely on how we manage them. Patience and consistency seem to be the most important factors in getting children to obey. Try not to call him unless you have to, but then insist that he comes. Be sure that your requests are reasonable. Don't annoy him by calling him and giving him orders all day long. Make him learn that when you call him, there *is* a good reason such as lunch or supper.

Another very important thing for an active little boy like yours is to be sure he has enough to do so that he doesn't have to amuse himself by throwing things at children or at cars. If children have not got enough to occupy them and to use up their normal energy, they will naturally get into mischief—which means being active by doing things of which grownups disapprove. If they don't get enough attention and fun and excitement in the normal course of events, they will think up mischievous things to do just to make life more interesting.

Make a point of playing with your little boy and giving him all the attention he wants when everything is all right. As parents we usually do the opposite. We let well enough alone and then concentrate upon the child when he has displeased us. In the long run, the slower way of patience and understanding is more efficient as well as being more fun.

♥ ♥ ♥ ♥

TEACHING NEW MOTHERS IN A MODERN HOSPITAL HOW TO CARE FOR BABIES AT HOME

Wartime QUIZ for Mothers

These vital questions *about baby care were asked of 6,000 physicians, including most of America's baby specialists, by a leading medical journal. Here are their answers:*

QUESTION: ***"Do you favor the use of oil on baby's skin?"***

ANSWER: Over 95% of doctors said *yes*. Hospitals advise the same (and almost all hospitals use *Mennen* Oil—because it's *antiseptic*).

QUESTION: ***"Should oil be used all over baby's body daily?"***

ANSWER: 3 out of 4 doctors said *yes*—helps prevent dryness, chafing. (Most important—*antiseptic* oil helps protect skin against germs).

QUESTION: ***"Should oil be used after every diaper change?"***

ANSWER: 3 out of 4 doctors said *yes*. (*Antiseptic* oil helps prevent diaper rash caused by action of *germs* in contact with wet diapers).

QUESTION: ***"Up to what age should oil be used on baby?"***

ANSWER: Doctors said, on average, "Continue using oil until baby is over 6 months old." Many advised using oil up to 18 months.

ANSWER: 4 out of 5 doctors said baby oil should be *antiseptic*. Only one widely-sold baby oil *is* antiseptic—Mennen. It helps check harmful germs, hence guards against prickly heat, diaper rash, impetigo, other irritations. Hospitals find Mennen is also *gentlest*, keeps skin smoothest. Special ingredient soothes itching, smarting. Use the *best* for your baby—Mennen Antiseptic Oil.

Can I Reform a Periodic Drinker?

[CONTINUED FROM PAGE 63]

a deep-rooted respect for his mother and never wanted her to know of his weakness. On the nights he drank he came home after they were in bed. If Bob could be so thoughtful in considering his parents' feelings, why couldn't a wife and son merit the same treatment? I've tried so hard to be a good wife to Bob. I'm nice looking, a good housekeeper and cook, never look at another man, and I am a good mother to his child. What more can a wife do for a man?

Bob had closed the apartment and placed the furniture in storage. He will not believe that everything is over between us. He says we must make a home together for the baby's sake and his parents say I am selfish to think only of myself, that the baby needs a father and Bob needs a wife. His religion does not recognize divorce, while mine does.

My parents, on the other hand, say Bob will never change. They insist he has had plenty of chances already but always forgets his promises once he has me back again. They point out that the baby is too young to understand anything now, where later on it would be worse for a child. They say I am still young enough to make a new start both for myself and baby and work out a different kind of life without Bob.

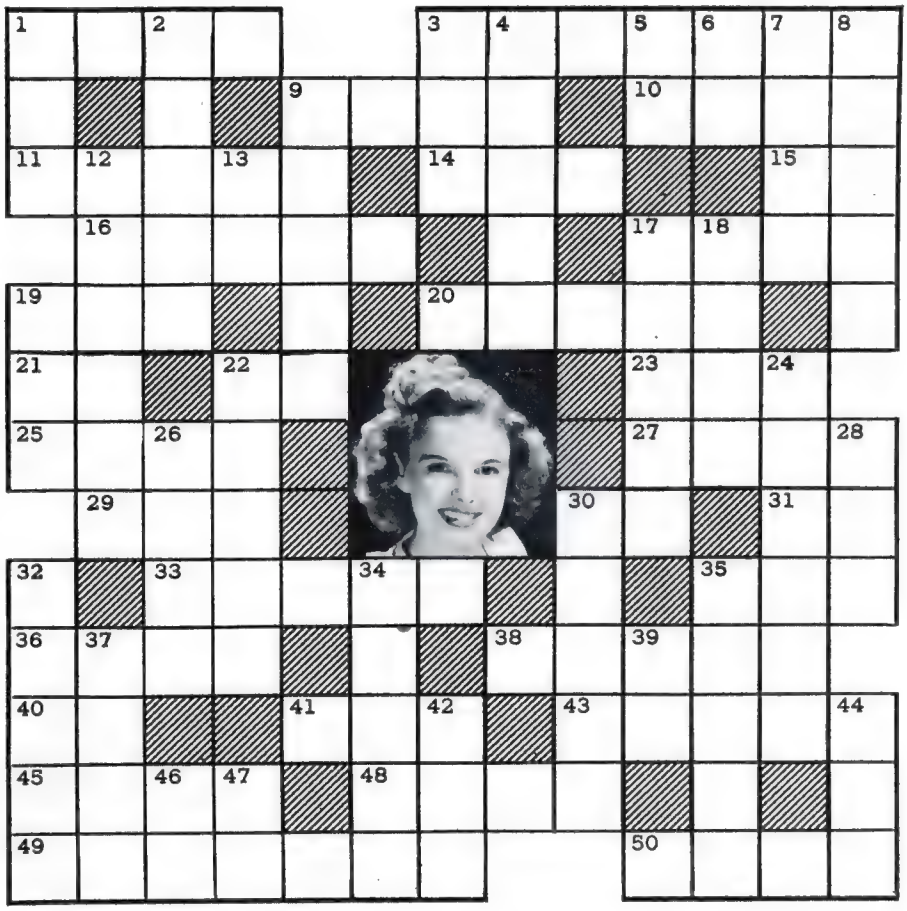
Bob, of course, acts very penitent, swearing he has taken his last drink. He seems to think he can win me back again with a big bank account. He says he'll never love anyone the way he loves me, and if I don't take him back I will drive him to drink. He threatens to take the baby away from me part of the time at least. I don't want any support from him whatever, should I decide to go through with the divorce. If I go that far I want to make a clean break with no ties from the past.

Can you help me solve my problem? Should I give Bob another chance for the baby's sake or should I think of myself? Should I make a clean break now while I am young enough to build myself a new life? Or do you think it is possible that Bob is really straightened out and do you suppose it would be permanently? Those who have faced a similar problem might be able to help me find the answer to mine. I do hope so. I am waiting anxiously for advice.

Send your letters to Mrs. Claire R. c/o TRUE CONFESSIONS, 1501 Broadway, New York, (18) N. Y., before August 20.

New Victory "V" War Stamp Corsage.

MOVIE CROSSWORD



For Solution See October TRUE CONFESSIONS

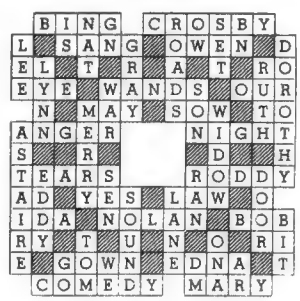
ACROSS

1 & 3. Star of this puzzle.
9. What she receives from admiring fans.
10. She is billed as one in screenplays.
11. First name of Miss Coleman.
14. Descriptive of musical comedies.
15. Birthplace of Ginger Rogers (abbr.).
16. To add music to a picture that already has sound effects.
17. Kind of Brothers appearing as dance trio in Rhythm of the Islands.
19. It was thrown about by Keystone comics.
20. Princess in Palm Beach Story..
21. This state served as film title of recent Roy Rogers Western (abbr.).
22. Initials of 20 Across.
23. Players stop acting when director shouts this direction.
25. First name of Mr. Kelly, teamed with pictured player in recent film.
27. Chinese doctor in Dr. Gillespie series.
29. Artificial setting for a movie scene.
30. Manuscript (abbr.).
31. Mr. Arlen's initials.
33. What scenarists do for movies.
35. Pictured actress was starred in ——— Me and My Gal.
36. Hangmen ——— Die.
38. Comic strip heroine now in films.
40. Box office (abbr.)
41. ——— a Great Life.
43. Another name for "other woman" in love triangle.
45. First name of Gene Tierney's husband.
48. Theme of romantic screenplays.
49. Popular term for films in which star of this puzzle has appeared.
50. Principal role such as that which she is given.

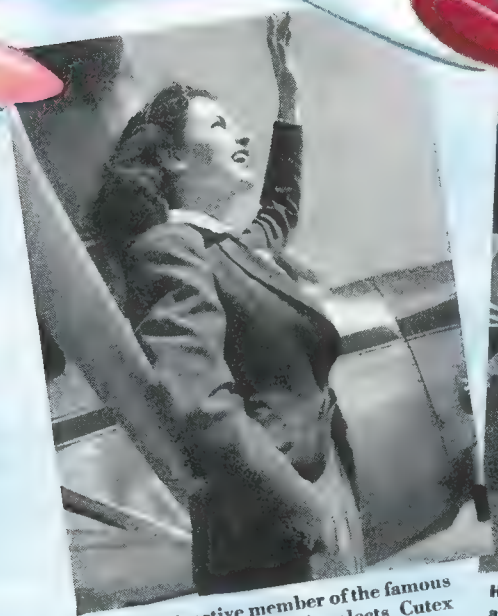
DOWN

1. First name of a star of White Savage.
2. What star of this puzzle must do in certain films.
3. John Ridgely's co-pilot in Air Force.
4. Loretta's co-star in China (poss.).
5. Judge Hardy's off-screen initials.
6. Life Begins ——— 8:30.
7. Pictured star's real one is Gumm.
8. Curtains which are lowered on stage instead of drawn.
9. Mrs. Nick Charles in Thin Man films.
12. Player's remark, which other players are supposed not to hear (pl.).
13. 1 Across is Mickey Rooney's ——— star in Girl Crazy.
17. Short stockings such as pictured actress wears for play.
18. Descriptive of events shown in March of Time releases.
19. Porky, of the animated cartoons, is one.
22. Studio at which star of this puzzle works.
24. Annabella's husband.
26. Short feature concerning latest events.
28. Pictured star's singing voice is pleasing to this.
30. Hero of certain Disney films.
32. Fontaine in The Desert Song.
34. Pictured star has ——— role in Presenting Lily Mars.
35. Comedy.
37. One who had title role in Miss V From Moscow.
39. George Irving's initials.
42. Distress signal sent out by Rosalind Russell in Flight for Freedom.
44. Harpo's way of saying "yes."
46. What Mr. Brendel is called.
47. Initials of actor who portrays Scattergood Baines.

Solution to August Puzzle

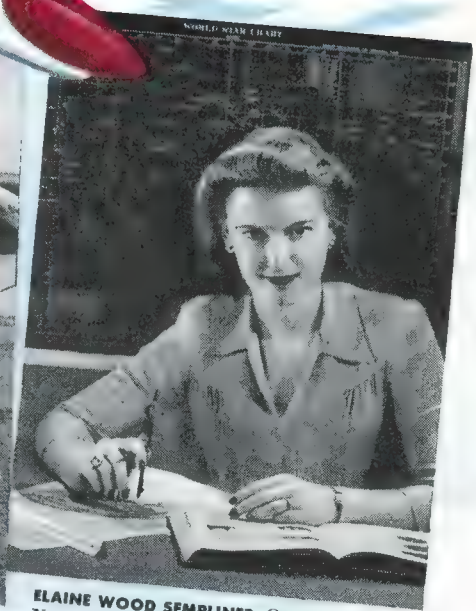


AMERICA'S SMART FLYING WOMEN choose favorite Cutex shades



GAY GAHAGAN, active member of the famous 99'ers (over 400 air hours), selects Cutex ON DUTY. "It's the softest, loveliest shade I've ever worn. With extravagance out for the duration, no wonder it's so popular."

HAZEL STAMPER, working at Piper Cub plant and training for her pilot's license, chooses Cutex ALERT—says, "I like Alert because it is so flattering and so in the spirit of the times. It makes my spirits zoom!"



ELAINE WOOD SEMPLINER, Queen of the 1941 National Intercollegiate Air Show, chooses Cutex OFF DUTY. "It's such a daring color—a real 'lift' in these serious times. Yet only 10¢ for such a wonderful polish."

RUTH GRAY trains Pan American World Airways' Trans-Atlantic pilots to fly blind. She says, "Wearing Cutex YOUNG RED is like going into a glamour spin. It keeps me looking feminine even in a man-size job."

TEDDY KENYON, winner of national flying laurels, now flying for Grumman Aircraft Corp., chooses Cutex LAUREL. Says, "It makes your hands look so feminine . . . and saves money for all-important War Stamps!"

ELINOR "IRISH" FAIRCHILD, enthusiastic young member of Women Flyers of America, says, "I choose Cutex SADDLE BROWN. It's a wonderful shade! So sophisticated—and marvelous with flying togs or date dresses."

only 10¢
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NORTHAM WARREN, NEW YORK

Debutante... 1943 style... she stays sweeter with NEET

Stay Sweet... Get NEET!

NEW NEET Cream Deodorant is *answering the call to arms*... the arms of thousands of war-active women who need *more than ever* the effective protection to daintiness that only a fine deodorant such as Neet can assure.

New Neet Cream Deodorant quickly stops perspiration and underarm odor from one to three days. This fluffy, stainless, greaseless cosmetic type of cream applies easily and vanishes almost instantly. Makes arms dry and odor-free. Will not irritate normal skin or injure clothing.

Try New Neet Cream Deodorant today! Won't dry in jar. 10¢ and 29¢ sizes, plus tax.

KEEP NEAT WITH...

SIMULATED
DIAMOND RINGS

Just to get acquainted we will send you smart new yellow gold plate engagement ring or wedding ring. *Romance* design engagement ring set with flashing, simulated diamond solitaire in sentimental, orange blossom mounting. Wedding ring is deeply embossed, yellow gold plate in exquisite *Honeymoon* design. Either ring only $1.50 or both for $2.79 and tax. SEND NO MONEY with order, just name and ring size. Pay on arrival then wear ring 10 days on money-back guarantee. Rush order now!

EMPIRE DIAMOND CO. Dept. 885BN Jefferson, Iowa

GRAY HAIR TURNING DEEP BLACK

says Mrs. J. B., Chicago

"After using Grayvita only a short time, I noticed my gray hair was turning to a real deep black, exactly as it used to be. What a difference this makes in my appearance."Mrs. J. B., Chicago.

Mrs. J. B.'s experience may or may not be different than yours. Why not try GRAYVITA? Many like Mrs. J. B. report favorable results. Tests reported by a National Magazine of anti-gray hair vitamin discovery, Calcium Pantothenate revealed that 88% of those tested showed positive evidence of a return of some hair color. A GRAYVITA tablet is 10 mgm. of Calcium Pantothenate PLUS 450 U. S. P. units of "pep" vitamin B_1. Get GRAYVITA now! 30 day supply $1.50, 100 day supply $4.00. Send your order to us. You will be supplied thru nearest GRAYVITA dealer. St. Clair Co., Dept. F-19, 160 E. Illinois St., Chicago, Ill.

Heartbreak Under The Big Top

[CONTINUED FROM PAGE 29]

a sharp snap of teeth, and a streak of white lightning that flashed near my arm.

When you're a trained acrobat, your muscles move instinctively and start reacting to danger a split second before it registers in your brain. That is why Wildfire missed burying his wicked teeth in me.

There was no one in the lane but us, as the property men and the clowns were all in the Big Top preparing for Mazeppa's riding act. The instant Sultan heard Wildfire's wicked little scream and saw him go for me, he gave a trumpet of rage and swung his trunk at the horse. Another instant and the two of them would have been in a fight that might have wrecked the whole show and caused a panic among the audience. Already, Sultan's cry of rage had been heard by the other elephants and they were answering his call. Sultan was the acknowledged leader of the bull herd.

I did the only thing possible. Leaping on to his weaving trunk I yelled, "Up, Sultan! Up!" The well-known command made him forget Wildfire for a second and he raised himself on his hind legs.

In the meantime, Mazeppa had jumped for her horse and caught him by the nose (she never used a bridle in her act) and was caressing and calming him by whispering in his ear.

Our animals quieted down under our influence and the whole episode couldn't have taken more than ten seconds, so swiftly had everyone moved. But nobody knows how near panic and disaster that crowded circus was in those few seconds.

Mazeppa laughed a short sneering laugh and still caressing her horse's neck she said, "I'm afraid you're just another one of the persons Wildfire doesn't like. He's funny that way!" Her pale green eyes with the flecks of light brown in them reflected the hate for me that was there.

"He won't find it so funny if he tries that again with me," I said hotly. "Sultan doesn't like your horse from now on either. So take my advice, Mazeppa, watch that brute when I come out of the ring or this bull will kill him."

"Is that so," she sneered. "Suppose you remember that I'm the star of this show and if that bull ever attacks my horse, I'll —You know what happens to bad elephants on a circus, don't you?" she said meaningly.

It was a wicked thing to say to an elephant trainer; because the law of the circus is that if an elephant intentionally hurts another person or animal, or property, and it is found that he is not suffering from any illness (toothache is the usual cause) then he is to be shot or strangled. No chances dare be taken with an elephant who gives the slightest sign of running amok; as an enraged elephant might kill hundreds of persons, and do untold damage, before he is brought under control.

I saw the mocking light in her eyes. "Why you—" but at that moment the cue came for her and Wildfire to enter the ring and slapping the stallion on the rump she yelled a word of command and he raced into the ring; she after him waiting for him to make his first circuit alone, and then she sprang into the saddle, as he passed her, as if she had wings.

I'd sent Sultan away, but instead of going to his stake in the bull tent he lumbered off a few yards and stood watching me, his trunk waving, his little eyes bloodshot. I smiled to myself. I knew he was standing there waiting to see that Wildfire didn't come at me again. I knew he would sense every intention the horse had toward me from now on.

I watched Mazeppa's act from where I stood. Round the arena the beautiful white horse rode the wind; its flaming red nostrils extended wide, eyes flashing, mane and tail flying in the slip stream of its own terrific speed. Mazeppa rode side saddle like all the classic lady equestriennes, clinging on with only the underside of her knee, her arms free, her long titian hair streaming out parallel with Wildfire's tail.

She stood on her hands on the saddle, legs pointed straight to the roof of the Big Top. She leapt to the ground and back again without horse or rider ever changing stride; she rode stretched alongside his flanks, clinging to the pommel with one hand; she picked up small objects from the ground, hanging on with her knee, her head down, her hair trailing perilously close to his pounding hooves.

It was a wild, thrilling sight; an exhibition of consummate skill and daring which she topped off by sending him over a five-barred flaming hurdle, which had been sprinkled with kerosene and lighted. All through her act the crowd rose to its feet cheering her frantically as she thrilled them by the terrific speed of her riding.

LOOKING back now, I can see that the terrible and tragic feud between Sultan and Wildfire and their mistresses started that afternoon. All trained animals are different from ordinary ones. When you are as close to one particular pet as Mazeppa and I were to ours, they will love you with a loyalty and devotion that is seldom found in any human. Sultan, who loved me better than anything on earth, knew that Wildfire meant to kill me, and Sultan's law was kill or be killed.

Slowly, almost imperceptably, Chico's manner, too, changed toward me. Just little things at first; such as not being around to hold the rope up which I climbed to join Spangles in our iron-jaw act. It wasn't his job, of course, but he'd always been there below me, looking up, smiling at me, his eyes anxious. Lots of things could happen in that act; an unsuspected loose tooth or a weak swivel . . .

He didn't come into our house car as often as he used to and I'd find myself wondering, during my act while my mind and body were spinning, where he was. Whom was he with?

I started to notice how he'd give a special smile and a slight bow to Mazeppa when he'd finished his most dangerous trick and she stood in the entrance clapping her hands. I became aware how carefully he was grooming and dressing himself in two-day towns when there was a chance to get away from the circus lot for a few hours. He and I had always explored the towns on those two and three-day stands but now he made excuses. But he went on dolling himself up and he'd be missing when I went to call for him—and so would Mazeppa.

I noticed all these things and a lot more; trifles magnified by doubts and fears. Oh, Chico! my heart was crying. I'm losing you!

SALVAGED "little things" HELP SAVE LIVES

It was while I was doing my slack wire act that I fell. I knew why! And so did Mazeppa. She was standing watching me, her strange eyes shooting malignant rays of hate as I balanced on a tall ladder with only the thin swaying wire between it and the ground twenty feet below.

The evil magnetism of her baleful look distracted my attention as it was meant to do. It pierced the intense concentration that was necessary for me to keep my balance. I tottered and wobbled for a few seconds, trying desperately to regain poise. But her eyes burned into my brain. Thousands of faces from the stands became a whirling blurring mass as I fell.

It was Chico who saved me from serious injury. He was standing by her side; and being an acrobat himself he knew that psychological instant when equilibrium fails. "Jump, Bonny!" he called, rushing out into the ring; and I jumped down and into his outstretched arms, the muscles of both of us coordinating to break the fall. We rolled, ball-like, on the ground together.

I would have got off with just a bad shaking up if the steel ladder hadn't fallen on top of me cracking a rib and dislocating my shoulder.

Chico carried me out to the back yard and there the circus doctor soon had me fixed up. It meant, however, that I would be out of the ring for a week.

Sultan spent most of his days and nights outside the door of my house car, his trunk inside, and only when I ordered him would he go away and eat. Luckily it was a three-day stand else they'd never have got him on the train. All the animals on this outfit traveled by rail. On the third day I was able to get up and move about.

If that accident had happened a few weeks earlier, Chico would have spent every available moment with me. But he only came to see me twice the whole time I was grounded. I knew what was happening, and one day while I was convalescing I went to watch Mazeppa's act from the reserved section, right opposite the connection entrance where she came in with Wildfire.

Chico was standing there watching every move of her thrilling loveliness. I saw how his eyes gleamed as he gazed, thrilled and fascinated. But it wasn't this alone that told me how much Mazeppa and he had progressed in their affair; it was Wildfire. For when they came off at the finish of her act, the big white stallion went up to Chico and gently nuzzled him, allowing him to stroke his neck.

Wildfire was a man killer and wouldn't allow anybody to go near him but Mazeppa. She had to feed him, groom him, bed him down, and saddle him for her turn in the ring. Only when she stood at his head and held his nose could anybody approach within ten feet of him. So when I saw Chico caressing him, I knew that the horse instinctively recognized Chico as his mistress' friend. A privileged friend. Wildfire knew that Mazeppa loved Chico just as Sultan knew that I did too. Wild animals are like that with those they love.

For days I took up my position in the reserved section and watched them; and then I saw her kiss him and his arms go round her pressing her to him. This was my fiance!

That was the night I crept out of my house car and waited in the darkness for them to return from the secret rendezvous one of the razorbacks told me they were keeping. In the shadow of her own luxurious trailer I heard her say to him, "Come on in, Chico, and we'll make some coffee."

"No. I'd better not, dear," he replied. "Somebody might see us and tell Pop.

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He'd be furious if he knew I was spending so much time with you. He's all set for Bonny and me to get married and join the families together."

"I can't bear the thought of you and Bonny getting married," she said. "It seems so—so—Oh, I don't know! But she's not good enough for a man like you; with her broad shoulders and—"

He broke in quickly, "Oh, come now, Mazeppa, Bonny and I have been together since we were kids. She's a handsome girl and she's solid gold all through, is Bonny. She's the only girl I've ever loved in my life until—until—"

"Until you met me!" she finished for him. "That's it, isn't it, Chico? That's what you mean?" Chico didn't answer and she continued, putting her arms around his neck, "I'm solid gold too, honey, if you'd only give me the chance to prove it to you."

She pressed his head down to hers and his arms went round her, his lips meeting hers in such kisses as he had never given me even in his most tender moments.

I heard her murmur, "Oh, my darling, you love me, don't you? You know you love me! So why try to fight against it. I love you! Say you love me, Chico. Say it! Hold me in your arms and tell me you'll never let me go."

My heart almost stopped beating as I waited for his answer.

It came, "I *do* love you, darling, God help me! I do!" And he smothered her face and neck with kisses.

"You're so beautiful," he kept saying. "I've never seen anyone or any thing as beautiful as you are."

Presently he put her from him and said, "What can I do, Mazeppa? I'm engaged to Bonny and I know she loves me. I can't hurt her."

"But you don't love her, Chico," she said eagerly. "She could never give you the joy and happiness that I can give you. You and I were made to love each other. The very touch of our hands is enough to send our pulses racing."

I could have shrieked from the torture my soul was enduring but I remained mute, suffering my agony in a terrible stunning silence.

"I must go," he muttered at last. "They'll be coming to pull out for the road in a minute or two. The razorbacks have got the canvas down and loaded."

"Listen, Chico," she said still clinging to him, "I've got something to show you." She pulled from her bag a long folded paper. "Have you got your flashlight?"

"Yes, but I daren't use it here. We might be seen. What is it?"

"It's a contract for 'The Big One' for next season!" she said exultantly.

"What! You mean you've really made it!"

"Yes, honey," she said triumphantly, "and I can get your act in there with me. That ought to help Poppa Mancini to look on me with more favor; and that will be the way to cut loose from Bonny and her family."

I couldn't bear it any longer. With scalded eyes and blistering hate in my heart I crept silently away to hide my humiliation and shame. Her beauty is bewitching him, I thought wildly. He doesn't really love her. This was only physical attraction! His senses are betraying him.

If I'd have thought that Chico could have found life-long happiness with Mazeppa, I would have stepped aside and given him back his engagement ring. I loved him well enough for that. But I had known his every thought since child hood. I knew the heart and soul of him better than his own mother. We had shared our dreams, our secret thoughts. Chico was good, spiritually and morally. He had been brought up strictly by his religious family. I knew he was fighting a battle with his conscience over me.

As for Mazeppa! I recognized her for the Delilah she was!

Then why did I do it! Why did I go, night after night, and listen to them making love? What queer trait in my character lured me with fatal fascination to their nightly rendezvous at the door of her trailer?

And Sultan watched too; his little eyes were never off Wildfire as we came out of the ring after every performance and we met them coming in. Mazeppa and I knew that one hostile action on the part of either of us, was enough to send those two animals into a squealing, kicking, trumpeting cyclone of murderous fury that would wreck the whole show.

As I lay on Sultan's tusks and took my smiling bows to a delighted audience, I would say to him, "I hate her, Sultan. I *hate* her!" Wildfire knew that Sultan hated Mazeppa, and the tension of those moments when we met in the canvas lane was like playing with fire on an open keg of dynamite.

THE weeks went on and the invisible barrier between Chico and me grew stronger. Now and again he would take me in his arms and kiss me as if in duty bound. I never said anything; I never let on that I watched his meeting with Mazeppa.

It soon became known that she was to join "The Big One" next season. It was well known, too, that the scout from the greatest show on earth had come to see the Flying Mancinis and they had been offered a contract.

But old Poppa Mancini had said, "Not without the Burdetts."

And then came one of those unexpected breaks in show business—that makes one feel that miracles still happen. *The Big One wired for me to join them with Sultan at once.*

There was only one other act in the country like the one I did with Sultan. To be truthful, hers was the original. She was the great Cora; billed as THE BRAVEST WOMAN IN THE WORLD.

She had been one of The Big Show's greatest attractions for some years. When my dad first saw her, I was only a little girl but Sultan had already been picking me up for years on the parade. It was the picking-up part of the act and laying me on his tusks that was the danger. Only people who know what a mighty grip an elephant has in its trunk can understand the risk a girl takes when she lets an elephant put his trunk around her body and raise her off the ground. A pound of pressure too much, and her ribs would be smashed like eggshells.

Dad knew that one day Cora would retire and he was readying his daughter to take her place. That was to be our means of access to "The Big One." And now the time had come, for The Great Cora had been stricken with illness and meant to retire for good.

When the scout for the Big Show had come to see the Flying Mancinis at Mazeppa's request, he had also seen my act and spoken to his chief about it. The wire to me which read; ARE YOU AND YOUR ELEPHANT AVAILABLE TO JOIN US AT ONCE? was signed by one of the world's greatest showmen.

Dad wired right back: "IF YOU ARE WILLING TO TAKE FLYING MANCINIS AND ARRANGE TO BUY OUR CONTRACT FROM PRESENT MANAGEMENT WILL JOIN."

Then began endless days of trying to

SALVAGED "little things" HELP SAVE LIVES

arrange a settlement with the show we were with. They knew the Big Show had to have my act so they were holding out for a big price. Not that they could be blamed; for, after all, they were losing some of their best acts by letting the Burdetts and Mancinis go.

The day finally came however, when confirmation of the contract arrived and we were all to join the Big Show the following Monday.

Dad had just finished doing his clown act in the Big Top when the circus mailman handed him the letter. He opened it and pulled out the contract. He came rushing over to the back yard where we were sitting on our trunks knitting sweaters for Bundles for Britain.

"It's here!" he yelled, waving the contract. "The Big One, at last!" He grabbed me in his arms and smothered my face with kisses, forgetting the clown white, the carmine number three, and the nose putty he had on.

But what did I care? Spangles and I hugged each other and laughed and cried while all the acts gathered round us and laughed and cried as well.

My heart was singing and leaping with joy. Monday! it kept saying. *Monday!* That was the magic word; the magic day. On Monday I would take Chico away from *her!* Monday we'd start life anew.

I'll win him back to me, I thought. I'll kiss him like she does. I'll make him forget her in such love as he's never dreamed a woman could be capable of. Already I was beginning to plan. As soon as we'd get settled with the Big Show I'd tell old Poppa Mancini everything and beg him to let Chico and me get married before Mazeppa joined the show next season.

All through the next few days I went about as in a dream. I noticed that Chico was kinder and gentler. When he kissed me good night and good morning his kiss was warmer and I clung to him and pressed him closer to me as I'd seen her do.

"Why, Bonnie," he said with a laugh, "I do believe the new contract put new life into you. You're positively—er—er I don't know just how to describe it, but you're different somehow."

"Do you like me like this, Chico?" I murmured.

"Yes, dear. Gosh! Yes," he replied. And he kissed me again.

I spoke of my love to Sultan and I knew he understood by the gentle way he caressed me with the soft sensitive end of his trunk.

But he still watched Wildfire with that wicked look that an elephant always shows in his little eyes when he's got a grudge against someone. He was still seeking that opportunity to kill the beautiful white horse that had tried to bite his beloved mistress.

It was at the matinee of that last Sunday that the haunting terror of superstition fell over the whole circus. The chanteys of the canvasmen took on a low moaning note as they hauled on guy ropes and stretched sagging canvas. The rigging men, testing acrobats equipment high up on the quarter poles of the Big Top went about their work with extra care, cursing beneath their breath, wondering where it would happen; when; and to whom? All this because the new band leader had opened the program that afternoon with the overture Poet and Peasant and closed it with Home Sweet Home.

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There are three jinx tunes that an old-time band leader will never allow in his repertoire. These are, Light Cavalry, Poet and Peasant, and Home Sweet Home. The minute anyone on a circus hears any of these tunes played they will say to themselves, I wonder who's going to get it today? And not until the accident has happened will the feeling of watching and waiting pass. The odd part about it is that something always does happen.

All through the afternoon show the tension had been terrific. We had got through without a mishap and everyone was breathing a sigh of relief until "Doors" would be called for the evening performance.

Between the shows I took Sultan into the center ring to rehearse a new trick I was training him in. High up in his rigging, Chico was putting in some practice on the trapeze. This was the time of the day when all the acts used to practice new tricks.

AND so it happened that just as I was coming out of the ring after our practice, that I met Mezeppa coming in to rehearse with Wildfire.

As usual we were alone in the canvas lane, nobody wanting to get anywhere near the horse. She pulled Wildfire broadside right in the center of the runway and stood there with challenging hostility in her beautiful eyes.

"I want to speak to you," she said imperiously.

"I've got nothing to say to you, Mazeppa," I replied. "Let us pass."

"Oh, yes, you have," she hissed, "you've got plenty so say to me if you only had the nerve. You'd like to tell me what you think of me for stealing Chico away from you, wouldn't you. I know you've been watching Chico and me. I spotted you the very first time you were skulking there in the shadow opposite my trailer."

My face went white with rage. "You mean to say you made love to Chico knowing that I was watching you!" I cried. "Knowing that he and I are engaged to be married?"

"Certainly!" She laughed that cynical sneering laugh of hers. "I thought I'd let you see how Chico reacted when he got someone in his arms who knew how to appreciate him. Besides, I wanted to make you squirm; because I *hate* you."

"Out of my way," I said in a low voice. "Get out or I'll—I'll—."

"You'll what?" she cut in, her voice dripping with venom.

Controlling myself with an effort I said as calmly as I could, "Let me pass Mazeppa. These animals are getting restless."

"Don't give me that for an alibi," she sneered. "I can hold Wildfire back, and if you're as good as you think you are, you can keep that bull in line."

Already Sultan had raised his trunk, curling it back on his forehead. "Will you let me pass?" I cried knowing at any moment Sultan would strike at the stallion.

"Not until you've heard what I have to say," she said.

"All right then; say it and say it fast. Sultan's getting dangerous."

Wildfire, too, was stamping his feet and swishing his long tail angrily. One belligerent move from any of us and those two would be in a fight to the death; oblivious to all human commands; utterly beyond control. *I knew this.* As a trainer of wild animals I knew it. So did Mazeppa.

"You think you're taking Chico away from me tomorrow, don't you?" she cried

"What has my future husband's plans got to do with you?" I said scornfully.

"This much," she cried. "I love him see, and I know that he really loves me. He's only marrying you because his family wants it, and because he's sorry for you. But I'd sooner see him dead than tied for life to a muscle-bound freak like you." And then she went on to say, deliberately, the one thing she knew would provoke me beyond control, "You're built more like a man than a woman, anyway—with those pugilist shoulders—."

I didn't let her finish; everything in front of me went red; red as the blood-colored rouge on her sneering mouth. Before I knew what I was doing, I'd slashed her across her face with the riding crop I was carrying in my hand.

There was a scream of rage from her, mingled with the squeal of Wildfire. Involuntarily her hand that was holding the horse's nose went to her own mouth and in that instant, he came for me. But quicker than he, was Sultan's trunk. Like lightning it descended on the horse's nose and pulled him off balance.

Then, with a curse, Mazeppa came at me with her own riding crop. Again Sultan's trunk rose and fell; this time around the slim waist of Mazeppa. I heard her cry out as she felt herself being crushed in that mighty embrace.

I knew what was going to happen, "Sultan!" I cried out, "Drop her!" But for once, he wouldn't obey me. At that moment, Wildfire, had heard his mistress' cry and charged at the elephant, his teeth bared. But he might as well have run up against a stone wall. He reeled back, his mouth streaming blood.

And then Sultan raised Mazeppa high in the air and threw her against the wooden seats by the side of the ring. She landed with a sickening crash and lay inert amidst the wreckage of splintered woodwork.

Instinctively, Wildfire knew that the confined space of the entrance was no place for him to give battle to Sultan. With a challenging scream of rage he raced into the center ring, Sultan lumbering after him, his trumpeting call ringing throughout every corner of the lot.

Back and forth turning and charging, Wildfire raced, his flashing hooves finding their mark on Sultan's huge body again and again. The elephant was trying to get him into position so that he could swing his trunk in one smashing blow or get a grip on one of those hammering hooves.

Up aloft, Chico, who had been practicing, remained on his perch, not daring to descend into that melee below him, while the circus people crowded the entrances unable to do a thing that would stop the battle of those two deadly enemies.

The calls of Sultan had been answered by all the other working bulls on the lot and soon into the ring, scattering the onlookers at the menagerie entrance, left and right, came four of the elephants,

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dragging their stakes and chains with them.

Then commenced an exhibition of animal sagacity that, tragic as the circumstances were, held the watchers spellbound. Each elephant formed himself into part of a line that gradually closed in and narrowed the arena of Sultan and the horse.

Not a blow had Sultan been able to get in on that Mercury-like horse whose hooves dealt blows as swift as lightning and as powerful as thunderbolts.

But smaller and smaller, Wildfire's fighting space dwindled. He turned at bay, eyes gleaming, flanks heaving, teeth bared, his proud untamed spirit shrieking defiance in shrill squeals at his formidable opponents. With a scream he charged at the mountains of destruction in front of him. It was then that Sultan got his first blow in. With a mighty sweep of his trunk, he caught the horse as he passed and knocked him clean off his feet. The breath whistled through Wildfire's teeth with a gasp as some of his ribs were staved in.

Wildfire was on his feet in an instant, however, backing toward the small part of the ringside left to him. Behind him rose tier upon tier of wooden seats in the reserved section. *And right in the path of him and the oncoming elephants, was the high, steel poles supporting the trapeze on which Chico was perched sixty feet above them.*

Terrified, I saw Chico's danger. Once those elephants charged in for the kill, nothing could stop them. They'd topple the rigging over and bring Chico crashing into the ring.

"Come down! Chico!" I screamed at him. "They'll wreck the rigging in a second."

BUT it was too late. Even as he started to descend Wildfire turned like a flash and hurled himself over the ringside into the maze of seats. With loud trumpets of triumph the elephants surged after him sweeping Chico's rigging away like matchsticks. I saw Chico fall fully fifty feet and land, catlike, on his hands on the back of the smallest elephant, then bounce off and hit the sawdust.

I raced in after him. Thank God! He was able to rise and stagger over to me where I dragged him to safety. "My shoulder," he groaned. "It's gone!"

Will I ever forget the tragedy that lay in his eyes as he spoke those words. If they were true, it meant that he would never be able to do trapeze work again.

The doctor took charge of him and I watched with leaden, fear-drenched heart what was going on up there amidst the wrecked reserved section.

By now Wildfire was struggling and kicking his way through the tangled mass of broken seats. Sultan, who had seemed to wave the others aside, followed him crushing all before him like a gigantic steamroller. High up in the top tier, Wildfire got his legs entangled and was trying desperately to get out. For a second the whole mass, horse and rows of seats, trembled and tottered, then collapsed. Steadily, inexorably, Sultan went after him, trunk raised, head weaving right and left.

I tried to save Wildfire! I did really. The beautiful animal had fought a gallant fight. After all he'd only been loyal to the mistress he loved even as Sultan loved me.

I ran to Sultan, calling him by name, commanding him to come to me. But Sultan was blind to everything but the enemy he meant to kill.

On he lumbered to where the horse was trapped amidst the wreckage. Like the

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Sword of Damocles his trunk hovered over Wildfire; then slowly it searched for one of those hind legs that had done him so much damage. Delicately he cleared the path of broken woodwork and took hold of Wildfire's leg.

A wild scream of pain burst from the horse. In another instant the leg was like pulp.

And then the circus manager came up with the big elephant gun.

"No! No!" I screamed. "Please don't shoot him! Oh, please! It wasn't his fault." I pleaded, "Sultan hasn't gone mad. I made him attack the horse. Oh, please, *please* don't . . ."

I said many things while I begged and pleaded for Sultan's life. I tried to take the gun away from him and in my frenzy I would have succeeded but three of the men wrestled with me.

"I'm sorry, Bonny," he said as the men held me panting and struggling, "but he and the other bulls will wreck the whole outfit if I don't stop Sultan. The horse is done for as it is."

The shrieks of the poor horse and the trumpetings of all the other elephants on the show split the air for miles around. I fought with all my strength against the three strong men who held me, while I saw the manager take careful aim at my beloved friend's eye. The roar of the big gun drowned out all other sounds as I collapsed.

I KNEW nothing more until I awoke to the dead misery of remorse that has been biting into my soul ever since.

Mazeppa was horribly injured. Every one of her ribs were broken and her beautiful face scarred for life. But that was nothing compared to the loss of Wildfire, the only thing she ever really loved.

Because of this I could sympathize with her. Hadn't I also lost the most faithful friend a human being had ever had? Where could I find and train another Sultan? Where could Mazeppa find another Wildfire? It would take her years to teach another horse the marvelous act that was hers.

Poor Chico will never fly again. He broke his shoulder blade and both his wrists when he fell and landed on the uneven back of the elephant. Only his superb muscular reaction saved him from death that awful afternoon.

Nobody ever knew the story of what started that tragedy. Neither Mazeppa nor I ever told of that quarrel between us and my wicked action in striking her. Mezeppa fortunately had a lot of money salted away and she has retired permanently from the circus. We never saw her again.

I've taken Chico's place with the Flying Mancinis and can do a one and a half turn in the air already. Years ago Chico had taught me how to fly; and soon I hope to be able to do the same trick as the great lady flyer who is with "The Big One" and does two and a half turns between one catcher's hands and the others. My husband says, "You'll do it, Bonny! You have the wonderful shoulders and the physique for it. You can do anything!" I kiss Chico and know that because I love him, I can do anything!

But we're still small-fry circus folk. Because of my rash jealousy, none of us has made "The Big One" but we have our hopes and dreams and they temper my remorse. Some day—some day . . .

In the meantime I am happy in my husband's love. He knows my story and has forgiven me. If I could only forgive myself.

♥ ♥ ♥ ♥

Second Chance for Happiness

[*Continued from page* 46]

head against his shoulder. "Don't, please! Nothing can part us. Nothing, Mel!"

THERE was no past or future during the hours while we ate the supper my maid served on a small table before the open fireplace. We chatted impersonally until she had removed the dishes and retired to the kitchen. Then I curled up in one end of the big, deeply upholstered divan, and Mel knelt beside me, his dark head against my shoulder. We were too happy, too lost in the dear, dear closeness of each other, to bother to talk. The radio was playing and the music was as much a part of our mood as the crackling fire.

When the program changed, I don't know. How long a man's voice had been sending out an appeal for missing persons to get in touch with their loved ones, isn't important. I don't believe Mel even heard any of the broadcast. But radio had been my whole existence—until Mel had come into my life. Subconsciously, I must have been listening because, without warning, without an instant's chill of foreboding, I was hearing the words:

"This is a desperate appeal to a missing mother. On December the twenty-fourth, the year of 1930, she gave birth to an infant son, in the Corey Home, in Chicago. On January fifth, 1931, she turned that child over to its foster parents.

"Those parents are now asking for help. Not for themselves, but for the boy. They have been searching for days, without success, for his real mother. If that mother is listening to this broadcast, I would like to tell her that her son's entire life may depend on her revealing her identity at once.

"Or if there is any person—or persons—who can offer a clue as to where the foster parents can reach her, will they please get in touch with—"

I heard no more. The next thing I knew, Mel was trying to force a glass of brandy through my clenched teeth. Mattie, my colored maid, was standing beside him, her black eyes round and frightened.

"Mebbe I'd better call a doctor, sir," she chattered. "I ain't never seen her keel over like that before. Must be something bad wrong. When I came in with that tray, I sure thought she was daid."

"I'm all right." I pushed the brandy away, and sat up. "It—it was stupid of me to faint like that. I—I guess I'm just tired."

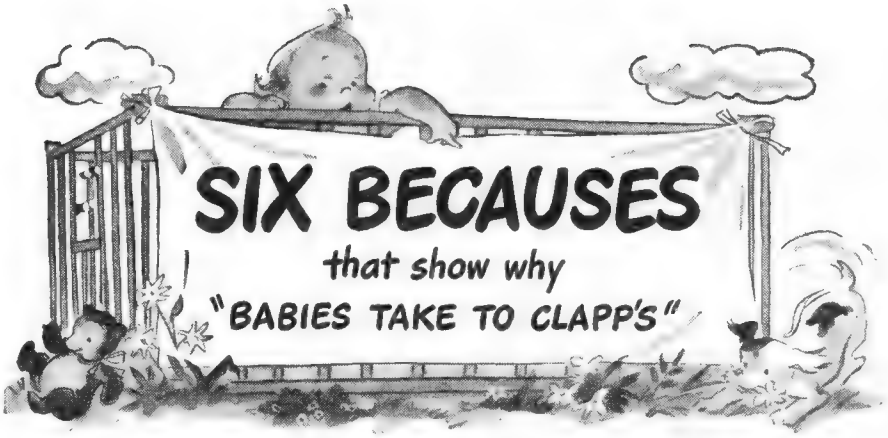
"Why didn't you tell me, darling?" Mel reproached. "I suppose I ought to have realized that you've been going day and night, but I was selfish enough to want to be with you every moment I could.

"It's bed for you, young lady." He tried to keep his tone light, but I could feel him trembling as he leaned down and scooped me up in his arms. "Lead the way, Mattie. And don't leave her until you're sure she's asleep."

But there was to be no sleep for me that night. Somehow I managed to control myself until Mel had kissed me a tender, worried good-night.

When Mattie finally left me, I opened my eyes and stared blindly into the darkness. Words were beating in my brain, desperate, panic-filling words. "Christmas Eve . . . January fifth . . . Get in touch at once. . . ."

Those words *couldn't* be meant for me!



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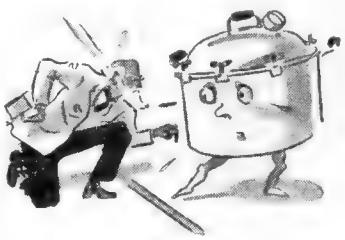

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3. —because a baby has a tongue! Babies know Clapp's foods are just right for little tongues. Clapp's strained foods have a fine, even texture. Clapp's *junior* foods have a coarser, *chewable* texture—for older babies.

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5. —because of a book with stamps! Your ration book is evidence that the government is trying to make sure there'll be enough baby foods to go around. *You* can help out—by using Clapp's Baby Foods *only for babies.*

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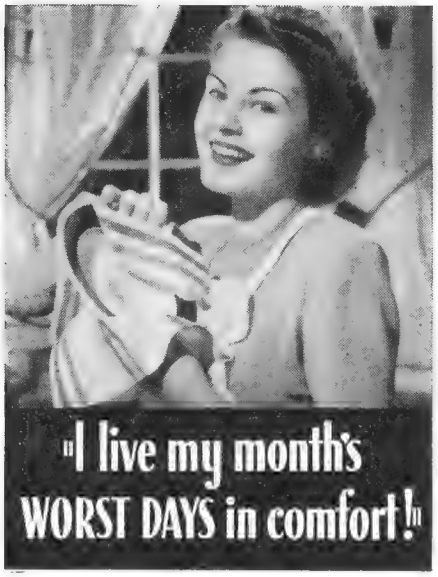

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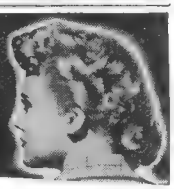

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I'd buried the past, grimly fought my way up from its folly and pain. Why should I let myself be dragged back, open wounds that it had taken years of agony and remorse to heal?

Your son's very life may depend on your revealing your identity at once.

But I had no son. I was Miss Katherine Bronson, one of the most popular young stars of the radio. Millions of people knew my name, my gay, glittering, free life. Millions of girls and women were envying my swift conquest of one of the bravest and handsomest heroes of the Battle in the Pacific. Where did an eleven-year-old boy fit into that picture?

A boy I had never seen, never once held in my arms. "I won't do it!" I heard my voice crying aloud. "I cut my heart out once to give him his chance. It's not fair to ask me to do it again, to give up everything I've starved and slaved and fought to get. Surely I've paid enough, earned the right to happiness. To love!"

Besides, I battled with my conscience, I might not even be the missing mother they were appealing to for help. Hundreds of girls must have given birth to baby sons on Christmas Eve, 1930.

But they didn't turn their child over for adoption on January fifteenth. They didn't have their baby in the ward of the Corey Home in Chicago.

There was no use pretending that all those facts could be sheer coincidence. I knew my child had been the only baby born in the Corey Home on that particular Christmas Eve. As if I could ever forget!

Fighting back sickening waves of an old, but never to be forgotten pain, I reached for the phone book, and looked up the number of the radio station that had broadcast the missing persons program.

TWENTY-FOUR hours later, I was on a plane, winging toward a small suburb of Chicago. Like a bar from a song that you can't banish from your brain, my mind was repeating, What am I doing on this plane? What am I doing on this plane?

I didn't even know why, after eleven years, I was being called for, or what sort of crisis awaited me when I reached the end of my journey. For when I'd frantically tried to question the lawyer, whose name I had gotten from the radio station, he'd been completely non-commital.

"I'm afraid I can't tell you anything about the case," he'd replied, in a dry, legal tone. "I was retained through a lawyer in Chicago. I believe there have been other lawyers similarly retained in most of our big cities. My client used lawyers to avoid publicity for all of the parties concerned. I think you can appreciate that, Miss Bronson. In Chicago, when you meet my client, you'll find out all the details."

My plane taxied into the airport in Chicago. If the lawyer had thought me a hard and heartless wanton who had cast aside her own child, what would the man think who had given my son his name, fathered him for nearly eleven years? Controlling my trembling legs with an effort, I made my way off the plane.

I was the only woman on the plane. Mr. Carter came directly to me and held out his hand.

"You must be Katherine Bronson. I'm James Carter. Would you like something to eat—a cup of coffee, perhaps? We've quite a drive to the house."

"I'd like some coffee," I gasped. I was afraid I was going to faint.

He led me to the airport restaurant, sat silent while I choked down a steaming cup. Gradually I felt able to speak.

"I can't wait any longer to learn why, after all these years, you are appealing to me for help. When I gave my—my baby to you, I put him out of my life." My face felt frozen, and I could barely move my stiff lips. "I taught myself to forget that he ever existed. That was the only way I could go on."

"I understand. Believe me, Miss Bronson, I wouldn't have dragged you back to all that pain, if I hadn't been at my wit's end." He ran a harassed hand through his scant, gray hair. "Della, my wife, and I have done everything in our power to make Richard happy. But it's—useless. Bluntly, I'm afraid that the boy is incorrigible."

I gripped the edge of the table. "Are you trying to tell me that my—son—isn't normal?"

"No, if anything, Richard is too bright. It's his temper, his utter rebellion against any sort of discipline. Even as a small child, he used to fly into the most violent rages. Spanking, or any form of punishment, only made him worse. Foolishly, because she worshiped him, my wife would resort to bribing him to be a good boy.

"That worked until he was old enough to go to school. From then on, he's been the ring leader in every mischief that went on. He's absolutely turned against his mother and me. Sometimes I feel that he actually hates both of us."

"Oh, no!" The sheer despair on his weary, lined face brought tears stinging against my lids. "But why should he feel like that if you've been kind to him! There must be something you aren't telling me."

"If we've done wrong, it's in being too kind and tolerant." His lips tightened. "We've blinded ourselves to Richard's faults for years. But when an eleven-year-old steals a gun and deliberately shoots one of his schoolmates, it's proof that there's an evil streak in him. If you can offer any knowledge that will explain his criminal behavior, you've got to do it!"

I sat in stunned silence, trying to take in the damning things he'd said about the child to whom I'd given life.

"You don't know what hell my wife and I have been through since they told us that Richard had been arrested for trying to kill another boy," Mr. Carter continued brokenly. "Thank God, he only wounded one of the lad's legs, or even my influence wouldn't have kept him out of the reformatory. The authorities agreed to let me try to find his mother, to ask her help. Now that I've met you, I can see that you're a healthy, decent person. But—there's bad blood *somewhere*. What was the boy's father like? Has the boy inherited criminal tendencies. We've got to know this in order to decide how to proceed with Richard's bringing up."

What was the boy's father like!

I shut my eyes against the shock of the words. Words that sent me back through the years. Back to a small Eastern city, with rows of staid, red-brick houses with white doors. I was born in one of those houses. I was one of the nice, well-behaved little girls and boys who didn't play with the kids from shanty-town. My old-fashioned, too-proper aunt had no idea that I spent most of my afternoons in the company of what she would have called "young hoodlums." If I'd been asked, I couldn't have explained why I liked those kids better than my own friends. The best I could have answered would have been that they were more fun.

Actually, I was rebelling against the cold stiffness of a home where there was seldom laughter, and the rigid discipline of an old maid aunt and a stern, unaffectionate father. I didn't know that I

Michele Morgan

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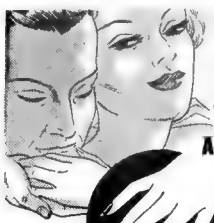

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craved warmth, and love, and the feeling that somebody really cared about me—until I met Timmy Moran. I was only twelve then, and he barely noticed me. But I had a real, and serious childhood crush.

You see, Timmy was a hero to the kids in shanty-town. He wasn't scared of anything, not even the cops. Even when he stole from the neighborhood shops, he wasn't afraid of being caught. He was too clever! But not quite clever enough to escape the law—and four years in the reformatory. Years in which, naturally enough, his handsome, rebellious face faded from my mind.

I had just turned sixteen the afternoon I bumped into him standing in front of one of the pool rooms in the down-town shopping district. Not stopping to think what my Aunt Martha would say if she heard that I'd been seen talking to that wild Timmy Moran, I rushed up and grabbed his arm.

"Timmy! Timmy Moran! When did you get—" I stopped, crimson flooding my face, for I'd been about to say, "When did you get out?"

But if I was embarrassed, he wasn't. His black, flashingly bold eyes swept over me in one quick look, and he gave an impudent whistle. "I don't know who you are, babe. But I'm glad you're glad to see me."

"I'm Katherine Wells," I stammered. "Don't you remember, I used to play with your sister, Lucy?"

His thick, dark brows drew together in a scowl. "I remember," he said flatly. "You're the snooty kid from Prince Street. Well, you'd better get moving, before anyone catches you talking to me."

"I don't care!" I flared. "I'm always getting lectures, anyhow. That doesn't keep me from doing what I want. Besides, Dad and Aunt Martha never know what's going on. He's always working, and she's always running around to this meeting of that sewing club, or something."

He had been staring down at my legs, but now his eyes slanted up into mine. "Well, if you're not worrying, I'm not either. I got a car. A pal of mine lent it to me. Suppose we drive out in the country and get acquainted."

That drive was just the beginning of stolen afternoons and evenings together. In spite of my show of bravado, there couldn't be many of them. It was inevitable that sooner or later the news that I was running around with Timmy Moran would get back to Aunt Martha.

She and my father were waiting for me in the living room when I returned from a stolen date with Timmy. I'd told them I was going to a high school basket ball game with the girls. I knew from the white-lipped fury on my father's face that somehow I'd been caught. I flung up my head. Since I was in for it, I was going to take it standing.

Before either of them could start lecturing, I flared, "I was out with Timmy Moran. I'm not ashamed to admit it. I'm sorry that I lied to you, but I'm old enough now to choose my own friends. Timmy's just as good as I am. He's had bad breaks, that's all!"

"Don't talk like a fool!" Father roared. "Stealing isn't a bad break; it's a crime."

"Timmy didn't really intend to steal that car," I rushed in defensively. "He just meant to borrow it to take the kids for a ride. It wasn't his fault that that truck ran into him and smashed up the car."

"That's nonsense." Father's tone was scathing. "Even if it were true, I'm not having my name associated with riff-raff like the Morans. Although you obviously haven't any self-respect, you should at least consider my position in this town. Until you promise me never to see that—that jailbird again, you won't be permitted out of the house unless your Aunt Martha is with you."

When I set my mouth in a line as stubborn as his own, he said, "I'll give you till tomorrow morning to decide whether you intend to defy me. If you do, your Aunt will drive you to the Convent school at Latrobe. I'm a busy man. I can't be watching you every minute. But I can put you some place where you will be watched. Go up to your room and think it over."

I went scuffing my feet in a way that I knew irritated him, fighting back impotent tears of rebellion. He couldn't treat me like a child, I raged. He couldn't shut me away in a school where I'd never be able to see Timmy! I was sick of being treated like a child. But it was sheer, youthful bravado. I knew that he not only could, he would. Father didn't make empty threats.

Locking my door, so Aunt Martha couldn't come in and give me one of her dreary sermons on being a little lady, I began pulling clothes from my closet and cramming them into the suit case that had been my last birthday present. From a box in my desk, I took the band containing the five dollar gold pieces that Aunt Martha gave me every Christmas. There were ten of them. Fifty dollars! A fortune, to my inexperienced, sixteen-year-old mind.

Certainly it was enough to take Timmy and me to some place where they wouldn't know that he had been in the reformatory, and he could get a job. I'd get a job, too. Salesgirl, or waitress, or something. It didn't matter much what, just so I wouldn't have to live in this house that I hated, where I'd never known anything except bullying and bossing.

That was as far as my plans went. Sheltered as I had always been, I didn't see how foolish they were. It took Timmy to do that, when I crept out of my home, and raced to his. I knew he slept in his old jalopy, parked in back of his house. He'd said it was more comfortable than sharing a hot, stuffy room with three younger brothers. It wasn't until later that I learned that years of being locked up had given him a complex about small, crowded quarters.

By that time, I was Timmy's wife, and had learned a lot about him; learned to tremble when he went into one of his swift, unpredictable fits of temper. To worry when he had a glass of beer, because he didn't know when to stop. To be afraid to trust him with a dollar, for fear he'd lose it in a poker game. That was my brief life with Timmy.

A life he'd honestly tried to warn me against. When I'd shaken him awake, told him, in a voice that was quavering with suppressed tears, that I'd run away from home, he looked as white and scared as I felt.

"Gosh, kid, I think you'd better go back home," he said. "I know your old man's pretty hard to take, but you don't know what it's like. Being on your own, I mean. Me, I'm tough. And I'd do about anything to get out of this burg."

I began to cry, and he put a clumsy arm around my shoulders. "Aw, don't do that, baby. You know how I feel about you. If we were old enough to get married, I'd say what's the diff, and take a chance. But you're just sixteen, just a kid."

"I'm not!" I snapped. "I'm old inside. Lots of people take me for eighteen because I'm so tall. Oh, Timmy—" my heart was thundering so it was hard to speak "why can't we get married? I—I never thought of that, but I bet we could. I know

that anyone would think that you were at least twenty-two."

That was true. When you've been kicked around the way Timmy had been, with a drunken father, and a mother who was always too busy having a new child to worry about the last one, you grow up fast. The "marrying minister" who pronounced us man and wife, didn't even question our ages. Fortunately for all the headstrong, impulsive girls like myself, it's not so easy to get married today.

SO IT was as Mr. and Mrs. Moran that Timmy and I traveled over the thousand miles that took us from our home town. We scarcely stopped, except to eat and snatch occasional hours of sleep, because Timmy was afraid that we might be picked up by the police that my father had sent out to find me. I tried to tell him that he needn't worry. My father would never forgive me for disgracing him the way I had. Running away was bad enough, but running away with Timmy was unpardonable. Even if he loved me, which I had always doubted, his pride wouldn't let him unbend.

It was Timmy and me against the world. A world that for three months didn't seem nearly as tough as Timmy had warned me it would be. Before my money was all spent, I had gotten a job in a tea-room, and Timmy was working at the stockyards. Between us, we made forty-three dollars a week. Plenty of money to pay the rent on a small apartment, buy our food, and even allow enough for movies and dancing at the neighborhood dance hall. Being so young, and in love, we didn't waste much time thinking about anything but the fun we were having. When I had pangs of conscience about my father, I smothered them with the thought that he had never worried about my happiness.

Then the punishment that an older person would have realized was in store, began. I discovered that I was going to have a baby and Timmy lost his job. But it was to be weeks before I was to learn of the second blow. Because when Timmy found me in hysterics at the idea of being pregnant, he didn't tell me.

"I don't want to have a baby!" I wailed. "I'm scared. I'll die. I know I will!"

"Cut it out. You're not going to die!" Timmy finally growled, when I refused to be comforted. "Women are having kids every day. My Mom's had ten. But if we're going to have one of our own, I'll have to figure out someway to get in on the big money rackets that are going on in this town. No kid of mine's going to be raised in a pigstye like I was."

"But I don't want to have a child!" I wept. "This is all your fault. I—I hate you!"

Timmy slammed out of the apartment. By the time he showed up again I was so scared that he might have left me for good, that I was ready to be reasonable. But I never wanted the baby, and the fact that I was wretchedly ill most of the time didn't help to soften my bitterness or lessen my fear that I was going to die.

If I hadn't been so wrapped up in my own wretchedness, I would have worried about the change that had come over Timmy. Because the hardness that had left his face after we landed our decent jobs, and were having such a gay time together, was back. His fits of temper and his bouts of drinking, were becoming increasingly frequent.

When I made a fuss, he turned sullen. "Aw, shut up," he'd snarl. "I'm taking care of you, ain't I? What if I do have a few drinks with the boys! It's my money I'm spending. We've already got enough in the bank for the kid when he comes,

Absentee-minded

How, you ask, can you be all-out for Victory on days like this . . . when you feel all in?

That's strange talk . . . coming from *you!* You who were so proud to carry the blow torch for Uncle Sam . . . first in your plant to sign the scroll pledging you'd *stay on the job.*

And now you're telling yourself that girls are different . . . and that one little layoff day won't matter. When you *know* that if it weren't for stay-at-homes, scores more ships . . . tanks . . . bombers would reach our boys!

That's how important it is to learn that loyalty never watches the clock . . . or the calendar! As Marge, your welder friend, said in the locker room—"When a girl takes over a man's work, it's up to her to see it through!"

And then didn't she say—"Trouble is, some girls *still* don't know what a big difference *real comfort* can make. The kind you get from Kotex sanitary napkins." Could be . . . she meant *you!*

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If *millions* can keep going in comfort *every* day, so can you! You'll understand why, when you discover that Kotex is made to stay soft while wearing . . . ever so different from pads that only feel soft at first touch. (None of that snowball sort of softness that packs hard under pressure!)

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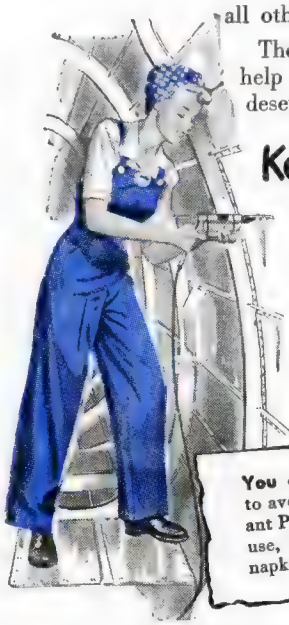

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Famous to Relieve 'PERIODIC'

FEMALE PAIN

Helps Build Up Resistance Against It!

If at such times *you* suffer from cramps, headache, backache, tired, nervous feelings, distress of "irregularities", periods of the blues—due to functional monthly disturbances — try Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound to relieve such symptoms because this famous medicine has a soothing effect on *one of woman's most important organs.*

Taken regularly — Pinkham's helps build up resistance against such symptoms. Also a fine stomachic tonic! Follow label directions.

LYDIA E. PINKHAM'S VEGETABLE COMPOUND

so what are you squawking about?"

That was another subject I didn't dare bring up—the extra money Timmy was bringing home every week. Maybe I should have suspected that he wasn't earning it honestly. But I didn't.

The word that Timmy had gotten mixed up in the slot machine racket, and had been killed in a fight with a customer who refused to pay up, left me prostrated with shock. At first, I refused to believe it. My husband wasn't mixed up in any crooked rackets! My husband had a good job in the stockyards. It must be some other Timmy Moran!

But it wasn't. When they finally persuaded me to go down to the morgue and identify the body, I gave one shrill, piercing shriek, and collapsed. They rushed me from the morgue to the nearest hospital. When I was conscious, and strong enough to be moved, I was transferred to the Corey Home to await the birth of my baby.

Both the doctors and the nurses had tried to get some information about my background, the name of some person they could inform about my desperate straits. But the more they coaxed, the more stubbornly I set myself against their kindly interest. My only excuse is that I was so stunned and defeated that I wasn't quite sane. Timmy was dead. I was going to die, too. What did anything matter?

Even the mention of my responsibility to my coming child, left me stony and unmoved. If it hadn't been for that child, Timmy would still be alive. I'd have been able to work and support us until he found another decent, respectable job. Timmy wanted to go straight. He wasn't bad at heart. Only the need to take care of me, and his unborn baby, could have tempted him to go against the law again.

"That's morbid, unhealthy reasoning," the doctor in charge of my case argued. "If you weren't just a child yourself, I'd call you inhuman. I know you're sick, physically and mentally, right now. But you've got a responsibility. It's obvious that you come from a good family. You must let us get in touch with them."

"I have no family!" I said through clenched teeth. "I have enough money to pay for my delivery. After that, I'll find a job and take care of myself."

"But your child—"

"I'm offering my child for adoption!" I cut in savagely. "That's what most of the girls who come here do, isn't it?"

"Most of those sad, unfortunate girls have no choice, Mrs. Moran." His eyes were sternly accusing as he stared at my bitter, rebellious face. "Your child is legitimate. We will have no trouble placing it in a good home. But I wish I could persuade you to think this over. Because I'm afraid the day will come when you'll regret it."

He didn't tell me that it would mean hundreds of empty-armed, pain-wracked days, countless remorse-filled, sleepless nights. Would I have listened? I don't know. By the time I had learned that lesson for myself, it was too late. My son had been legally adopted. The only clue I had to his foster parents was that they were moderately wealthy, and could give him a better than ordinary home.

I don't think I could have carried on if it hadn't been for the one small degree of comfort that knowledge gave me. Because once the shock of Timmy's brutal death, and the conviction that I would die in childbirth, had worn off, I was wild with remorse. How could I have given my child, my own flesh and blood, to perfect strangers.

You may be wondering why I hadn't gone home to my father and Aunt Martha. But never once had I considered that. My own childhood had been cold and loveless enough. Even if my father had taken me in, he would never have forgiven me. Not that I deserved to be forgiven. But he wouldn't have just taken his anger and humiliation out on me. Not for a day, or an hour, would he have let my son forget that he was the son of a jailbird, a worthless bum who'd been killed in a gangster's brawl. Any home would be better than that!

THE only thing left for me was to grow a hard, protecting shell around my heart, to work so hard that there wasn't time for thinking or vain brooding. It was this desperate necessity to escape from pain too violent to be endured that drove me up—up—up. From waitress, to cigarette girl in a second-class night club. From night club, to the front row in the chorus. I got that job because I was young, and blond and pretty.

I got the next one through hard work. For I'd discovered that I had a talent for mimicry. Without any special singing voice, I could still imitate most of the stars of the screen and radio. I began it as a gag to amuse the girls back-stage. It was by sheer chance that the producer, with a reputation for finding talent, heard me doing my take-off of the star in the show. It was he who got me interested in studying voice and diction. It was his influence that landed me my first spot as comedienne in a musical revue.

From then on, I literally skyrocketed up to a featured radio program. It meant work and more work. What playing I did was purely professional. Getting ahead was all I thought about. How flimsy, how sterile my existence was, hadn't occurred to me until I met Mel. I hadn't even known that I was emotionally dead—until I'd come alive again. And now . . . now. . . .

"That's my story," I finished, dully, raising tear-blurred eyes to Mr. Carter's tight, unrevealing face. "I never expected to tell it to anyone. I thought I had forgotten it had ever happened. I—I'm afraid it can't be much help to you. What—what can we do?"

While I'd talked, he'd been shredding his paper napkin to bits. Suddenly he crumpled them in his white-knuckled fist.

"There's only one thing left to do," he said bleakly. "You must take Richard. I know that legally he's my responsibility. But—I've failed. Maybe you can succeed in reaching the good in him. He's not all bad. I'm sure of that."

I shrank back, my heart stilled by the shock of his suggestion. I couldn't do as he asked! It was impossible Even if it hadn't been for Mel, and the first happiness I had known in eleven years, I had to think of my job. After the publicity they had built up about the aloof and untouchable Kit Bronson, how could I show up with a half-grown son?

"You don't understand! You don't know what you're asking!" I stammered. "Couldn't we send him away to a good school? I mean—I mean the sort of school where they are trained to deal with difficult children."

"We've tried that," he answered flatly. "You don't think I'd have appealed to you, except as a last resort! Good God. I don't want to give the boy up! I'm not asking you to do me a favor. I'm asking you to try to save your own son, your own flesh and blood. Perhaps if Della and I hadn't told him he was adopted, we might have been able to manage him. But we felt it was the right thing to do. I see now that we were wrong. Looking back, I realize the serious trouble began from the day he learned that he wasn't our own child."

Suddenly a spasm of pain twisted his lined face. "I'm not sure—because Richard has refused to talk about it—but I believe that the reason he shot his schoolmate was because he called him a—"

"No! Oh, *no!*" I burst out in a strangled gasp. "You couldn't have been cruel enough to let him believe that—"

"We didn't know he was thinking of it," he answered grimly. "And now he won't talk to us. He's shut himself up in his own room. The only person he'll speak to is the cook, who has made a pet of him."

"But if he won't talk to you, what makes you believe he'll talk to me—a stranger? How can I tell him that I'm his mother? If he's turned against you people for not being his real parents, he'll —he'll hate *me* for abandoning him. Surely you can see that!"

"I do see it," Mr. Carter replied, through set lips. "It might be better if we just introduced you as a friend who was going to take care of him until Della gets out of the hospital. Later on, when you get to know each other, you can tell him the truth or not, whichever you feel best."

He took out a handkerchief, and mopped his brow. "This has been pretty hard on both of us, Miss Bronson. Perhaps you'd like me to drive you to a hotel and give you time to think things over. But if you don't decide to take the boy, I don't know what will become of him."

I knew if I took my son, that I was saying good-by to Mel, and my love, and a second chance at happiness. A chance I had no right to snatch when my son needed me so desperately.

My son! It was the first time I had ever let myself think those words. They still had no reality. It was still too soon to visualize a future with him—a future for me that held no Mel and all the precious joy we'd shared and planned.

Before I lost my courage, I rose and said, "Shall we go? To your home, I mean. Richard is my responsibility. I see it now."

Fortunately, there was no need to worry about money. True, I would have to give up my job, and all the glittering and warming success I had worked so hard to win; for there was no possible way of fitting a problem son into that already overcrowded life.

He needed a real home, a full time share of my interest and attention. I had the means to provide it. For my father, who had never answered any of my letters begging him to forgive me, had evidently relented at the end. He'd died leaving me a comfortable fortune. I had never touched that inheritance. I didn't deserve it. But I could use it on Dick. It wasn't too late to make it up to him for abandoning him. No matter what it meant sacrificing, I wouldn't let it be too late, I resolved fiercely.

The only thing I couldn't find courage for was to meet this child I'd never once laid eyes on as his mother. When Mr. Carter finally stopped the car in the driveway of a large, gray stone house, I went into a panic.

"I—I can't face him!" I cried. "Not—not as his mother!"

"He doesn't need to know that right now!" he soothed. "I'll go upstairs and tell Richard about our plans."

He was gone so long that I very nearly bolted. When Mr. Carter finally led Richard into the living room it was only my years of professional training that kept a fixed smile on my stiff lips. Because he was so thin, so wretchedly unhappy looking. There were such deep circles under his black eyes; such an old look to the twist of his passionately willful mouth.

I had to press my arms tight against my sides to keep from holding them out and

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EVERY WOMAN IN A VITAL CIVILIAN JOB IS A SOLDIER IN THIS WAR!

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Without Painful Backache

Many sufferers relieve nagging backache quickly, once they discover that the real cause of their trouble may be tired kidneys.

The kidneys are Nature's chief way of taking the excess acids and waste out of the blood. They help most people pass about 3 pints a day.

When disorder of kidney function permits poisonous matter to remain in your blood, it may cause nagging backache, rheumatic pains, leg pains, loss of pep and energy, getting up nights, swelling, puffiness under the eyes, headaches and dizziness. Frequent or scanty passages with smarting and burning sometimes shows there is something wrong with your kidneys or bladder.

Don't wait! Ask your druggist for Doan's Pills; used successfully by millions for over 40 years. They give happy relief and will help the 15 miles of kidney tubes flush out poisonous waste from your blood. Get Doan's Pills.

gathering him to me. Oh, my baby! My son! my heart cried. What have I done to you?

But some power bigger than myself gave me the strength to check those words, to keep from pouring out all the mother love I hadn't known was in my heart. Instinct told me it would be a long time, if ever, before I could let this angry, sullen, rebellious boy know the truth. So I merely held out my hand and said, as matter-of-factly as possible:

"Hello, Richard."

He ignored my outstretched hand. His small features, so hauntingly like Timmy's, contorted in a ferocious scowl. "My name's Dick. And I don't care what Father says, I'm not going to go and live with you. I'm going to live with Cook. She doesn't care how bad I am. She still wants me. She told me so."

"I want you too, Dick." How did I keep my lips curved, my eyes free from tears, when I was being torn with an agony worse than the pangs of his birth? "I'll bet you'll have more fun with me, once you get to know me. We'll have a house in the country. And you can have a bicycle. Maybe a pony, even. You'd like that, wouldn't you?"

He hung his dark head, scuffed one shoe against the edge of the chair. I went over and put my hand on his rigid shoulder. "Please say you'll come and visit me. If you don't like it, I promise you that I'll bring you home. It—it won't hurt to try, will it?"

"Aw, I guess not." His thick-lashed, sullen glance was still wary and hostile, but I could feel his taut body relaxing. "Only I'd still rather go with Cook. But if I gotta, I guess I gotta. Only I'm not staying if I don't want to. I'm not scared of running away. I'm not scared of anything."

"Of course you aren't. Not a big boy like you." I forced myself to move away from him. Above his dark head, my eyes met Mr. Carter's worried ones.

BEFORE I left, we had decided that I was to take Dick just as soon as arrangements could be made. When Mr. Carter learned that I intended to give up my job and devote myself entirely to Dick, he wanted to help me financially. I refused. But I couldn't refuse his offer of a small house that he owned in a little California town, because I understood how he felt about his obligations. Besides I was still so stunned that I needed someone to help me plan.

I had to wire, canceling all my radio work. I got in touch with my lawyer and instructed Mattie to close my New York apartment. To all of them I gave the excuse of a nervous breakdown, and a need for a complete change and rest. But to Mel, I had to write the truth.

My darling: I began. And then I was sobbing so that it was hours before I could go on. I'll never be sure what I finally wrote. Did I try to spare myself, make myself seem like an unfortunate victim of circumstance? I can't remember. *Don't hate me too much*, I wrote and then asked forgiveness for not having had the courage to come and tell him the story face to face.

That letter was my good-by to Mel. My good-by to everything in life that was bright and shining. Anything else would have been wrong, unfair to Mel. For his name was not only famous now, but was an old and proud one. I couldn't let him give it to the son of a man who had been killed in a gangster quarrel. That was my problem. My duty.

A duty that, as dreary weeks stretched into heartsick months, I began to fear I would never be able to fulfill. For the boy was no closer than he had been to me that first day. His eyes never lost their sullenness, their resentfullness, their unchildish, cold hostility toward me, toward everything around him. He rebuffed every single attempt I made to be pals with him, to win his confidence—his liking, even. A dozen times a day, I'd nerve myself to tell him that I was his mother, and that even if he couldn't love me, I had a right to obedience. But there was something in his eyes—Timmy's flashing, rebel's eyes—that stilled my lips. Suppose he kept his threat of running away. . . . He needed someone, desperately, to love and respect.

That he found someone, and that that person should be Mel, is still hard for me to believe. At night, when I wake up, my heart thundering, I have to turn on the lights and stare at my wedding ring to be sure it's actually there. That there actually was an afternoon when I glanced up from my knitting, from my bitter thoughts of failure and loneliness, to see Mel and Dick coming up the path to the porch where I sat. Before I could recover my breath, or find my shaky voice, Mel was saying, in the dear tones that I remembered:

"Hello, Kit." Dick was babbling excitedly, "Boy, you should have seen the kids' faces when Captain Petrie walked into our room and asked for *me!*"

"I told Dick that I was an old friend of yours, and wanted to meet him," Mel put in swiftly, his quick glance commanding me to pull myself together, to meet his studied casualness. "But I didn't know that Dick already knew all about me."

"Everybody's read about you, sir." Dick's voice was awed, and his black eyes were twice their usual size. "And all those Jap planes you shot down, and that battleship you sank. We're making scrap books of all the heroes in this war. Would you—would you like to see mine?"

"I'd like to very much," Mel replied soberly. "But not right now, fellow. Kit and I haven't seen each other for a long time. We've got a lot of things to say to each other"

"But don't worry, I'll be around," he added, as the first real excitement and happiness I had seen on Dick's face faded. "We'll have plenty of time to talk about those Jap planes."

I began to cry. I couldn't help it. This wasn't happening! That wasn't Mel standing there, looking so heart-shakingly handsome and distinguished in his uniform. Then, when Dick marched into the house without a word of argument, and Mel took me into his arms, I knew it was real. For the touch of those arms was too real to be a dream.

"Did you really believe I'd let you go?" he was murmuring against my lips. "Did my love seem as petty and small as all that to you, Kit?"

"No! Oh, no!" I choked. "It was because I *was* afraid you would come, that I ran so far away, and didn't let you know where I was. You mustn't—we mustn't—"

THE WHOLE TOWN'S TALKING—what happens to a happy marriage when members of the family become jealous and spread malicious gossip? Desperately this wife tried to save her marriage. You'll want to read every word of this dramatic story in

October TRUE CONFESSIONS

His kiss ended my protests. And for awhile there was only the wonder, the bliss of being together again. Then I had to talk, to know how he had found me, what he wanted.

He pulled me down onto the porch settee, held me tight against him as he explained. The night he had gotten my letter, he said, he'd been so upset that he'd walked for hours in the rain, and had a bad relapse, and had been clamped back into the hospital. After he'd gotten out, it had taken some time for the detective he'd hired, to trace me. When Mel had gotten off the train in our town, and asked how to get to my house, he'd discovered he was across the street from the school building.

"Going in to meet Dick was sheer impulse," he confessed. "It was a good one. Because now that we're friends, and I'm a hero to him, you'll have to marry me."

He had been trying to keep his tone light, but it went starkly serious. "There's nothing bad or really vicious about that boy, Kit. He just needs somebody with a strong hand to manage him for awhile. And so do you. You've run your own life, made your own decisions, refused to take either help or advice long enough. Your letter told me more about yourself than you know, my darling. Dick is your son, headstrong, impulsive, angered by coercion. But given the right chance, he'll grow into a man as fine, and brave—"

"Don't! Don't, please!" I put my hand over his mouth. "I don't deserve to have you say things like that. I've failed so miserably. I—I haven't even been brave enough to tell Dick who I really am."

"We'll tell him some day. Some day when we can all be together."

Will that day ever come? For Mel is back in action. When I can't sleep, I get up and write him long letters about the improvement in Dick. I can't tell him how horribly I miss him, how I pray for his safety. He expects me to be brave, and I'm trying.

It would help if I could talk to Dick about his dad. Yes, he calls Mel that. I'm still just Kit. I'm somebody he obeys and respects because Captain Melvin Petrie did me the honor to marry me. I'll never forget his face the afternoon Mel called him to us and said:

"How would you like to have me for a father, Dick? You see, I'm going to marry Kit. And we'd like you for our son."

Dick turned so white and sick-looking that it was all I could do to keep from rushing and putting my arms around him. A sidelong, warning glance from Mel stopped me. I had to bite my lips till I tasted blood, when Dick mumbled:

"I—I don't think you'd want me—if you knew all about me, sir."

"I know all I *want* to know, fellow," Mel reproved. "But if you like, we'll talk it over some day. Right now, though, the question is, do you think you could take me as a dad?"

Dick could only nod his reply. I knew how he felt. I would have gladly died for Mel at that moment. I deserve him so little. He's so much bigger and finer than I ever believed any man could be.

We've had so little of each other, less than a month, that there was no time for shadows. But what of the years when he will remember that I gave my first love to another man? *My past can't be forgotten.* The best I can do is to strive every day to live up to Mel's standards and to try to teach Dick to grow into the sort of man who might have been his father if I'd only waited.

♥ ♥ ♥ ♥

Cover Girl tells —

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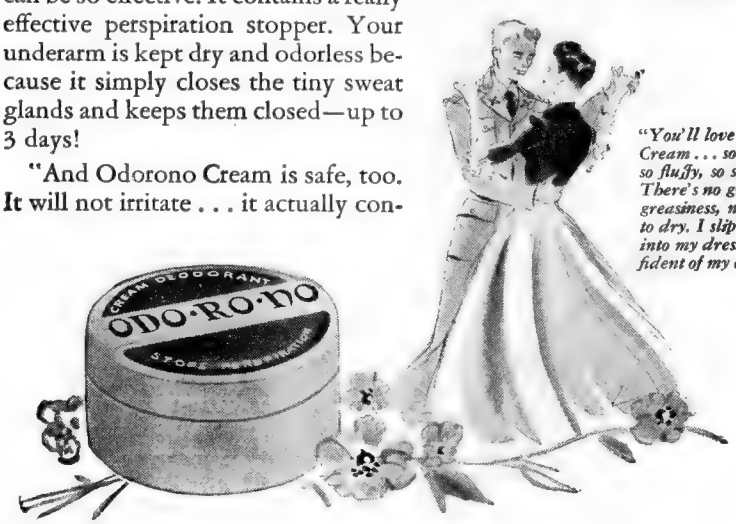

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I Climbed to Fame on Pretense

[CONTINUED FROM PAGE 23]

"Is there anyone else?" Mark Horman asked, still gently.

I laughed. "I never had a boy friend in my life," I admitted frankly. I could be frank with Mark, now. He had long since found out the truth of my hoax.

"When I was a kid I was too ugly—and since I started this Therese business, I've been too busy making myself into the real thing and fooling the public. After awhile I'm going to have some fun, Mark. I can't afford to yet. I used to tell my mother that I wished that I could marry someone wealthy who would buy me beautiful things, but I guessed that I never would because I was so ugly—and she, with a mother's love, told me that I wasn't ugly at all, but that I should grow up so intelligent and smart that I could make money enough to buy for myself the things I wanted. That's what I'm doing," I added laughing.

"I'm not exactly poor, Terry," Mark assured me with his slow smile. "As a matter of fact, I'm supposed to be rather wealthy. I think we could have fun together."

"Thanks, darling," I said lightly. "But I'm doing all right myself. Everything is fun just the way it is. I don't want to change."

I hadn't met Beldon Davies then. I didn't meet him until seven months after that when I was firmly established in my new shoppe and the women of the country were beating a path to my door.

I was making more money than I knew what to do with. I charged enormous prices for my clothes. It always seemed like such an ironical joke that these women should pay me exorbitant sums for clothes no better than those my poor little mother had toiled over so painstakingly. Somehow, I had the feeling that I was avenging her. How she would have smiled at that THERESE label! But it would have been a sad little smile. Maybe she wouldn't have approved. But I tried not to think about that.

I still put on my French act. I spoke English with a fascinating accent that had almost become a part of me. The women who fawned on me, gushed: "Oh Therese, no one understands my type or brings it out like you do!" They would have been furious if they had known that I was the daughter of a Texas dressmaker who had never seen the inside of a Paris dressmaking salon.

But I had a string of real pearls that matched my skin and a set of fabulous emeralds that matched my eyes. My apartment was furnished charmingly and expensively. I had my own car and chauffeur and personal maid and secretary.

AND then one day Estelle Leighton-Randolph brought Beldon Davies with her when she came for a fitting.

Estelle had always reminded me of Sally Wainstock. She had the same golden-haired, blue-eyed, fragile loveliness. She was the type men went quite mad about. She came from a socially prominent, once wealthy family now quite penniless; and although Estelle's name appeared in all the society columns and she came to me for her clothes, she owed me a bill of several thousand dollars. She and her family owed every one in town, as a matter of fact, and only got by because of their social importance. However, I had determined to tell her that she couldn't have the dress now being made in my workrooms until her bill was paid.

But that day when she came in with Beldon Davies, suddenly nothing else mattered. Isn't it funny how things like that can happen? You can go along, planning your life, living from day to day, thinking you have everything you want—and then, suddenly, you know that you haven't. You know that unless you can have this one thing more, everything else is empty.

That's how I felt about Beldon Davies—Dave, they called him!—from the start. I saw him looking at Estelle and I knew that he was in love with her, yet even that didn't matter.

He was too handsome. Many women had loved him, no doubt. He knew exactly how to make women crazy about him. He was tall, blond, healthily tanned, with mocking gray eyes and a laughing mouth showing even white teeth. He had broad shoulders and slim hips and a way of talking—throwing back his head, looking down at you from under long blond eyelashes—casual, not caring whether or not you liked him, but knowing that you wouldn't be able to help it.

Estelle went into one of the fitting rooms with Francine, the girl who always waited on her, and Dave, as he became to me almost from the start, looked around my salon—this background that I had furnished for the person I had made myself. The mirrored walls with soft green paneling, the furniture covered with white woollen fabrics, the jade green Aubusson carpet and the vast Coronmandel lacquer screens. Then in the back was the artificial window with a life-like painted scene of the Champs Elysees behind it, making you believe that you were looking right out on that famous French Boulevard.

"Nice set-up," Dave observed. "You're a clever child, aren't you? You must be piling up quite a nest egg for yourself with the whole social register howling to be gypped by you."

If it had been anyone else I probably would have slapped him. But there was a funny tightness in my throat and a pounding in my heart just looking at him. My voice was cool, however, when I answered: "Gypped? What makes you think my customers are being gypped, Monsieur Davies?"

He grinned down at me, head back, his eyes lazily smiling. "Aren't they?" he asked. "Not that it matters. More power to you. Wish I had the knack myself. Only I don't like to work . . . which makes it bad. That's why Miss Leighton-Randolph is giving me the air. Oh, very gradually and painlessly to be sure—but still definitely the bounce. I'm as poor as she is—and yet I toil not, neither do I spin. And she needs some one who can give her all these expensive trifles—"

He waved a well-kept but strong brown hand around my shop. For an unguarded moment I saw the hurt and the bitterness behind his mocking grin. He was in love with Estelle and she wanted more than he could give her. She had to have more. A wealthy husband.

When they had gone, I felt funny. I had never felt quite like this before. I couldn't get Beldon Davies out of my mind or the memory of him standing there, big and tall and handsome, in my shoppe.

In the days that followed I made a point

SALVAGED "little things" HELP SAVE LIVES

of finding out all I could about him. I found that he had told the simple, casual truth in his usual arrogant, impudent way. Like Estelle Leighton-Randolph his family had background but no money. When he felt like it, he worked as a customer's man in a brokerage office; but he was far more interested in polo and tennis and swimming and yachting and cocktail parties.

I HAD ample opportunity for social contacts now myself. My wealthy customers were delighted to have the exotic Therese with her emeralds and her pearls and her fascinating accent at their parties. So now I began going everywhere I thought Beldon Davies might be. I heard that Estelle was being seen with John Perthwell, almost middle-aged and many times a millionaire.

I sent her a little note telling her that her last order could not be delivered until her bill was paid and that if it was not paid within a reasonable length of time, I would be forced to sue her. I felt that if enough pressure were brought to bear it would strengthen her purpose in marrying for money.

Unscrupulous? Perhaps. But by that time I was terribly, desperately in love with Dave and he was beginning to pay attention to me. I wanted to be sure that Estelle was safely out of the way.

And at last Estelle Leighton-Randolph's engagement to John Perthwell was announced! Dave's grin was a little twisted in those days and his eyes were hard behind their mockery. He got in the habit of dropping by my apartment and sitting there slumped on the couch with a highball in his hand while the marble ash tray beside him piled high with half-smoked, nervously discarded cigarettes.

I had encouraged—cleverly fostered—this habit of dropping in on me. I did everything I knew to whet his interest. I even told him the truth about myself—about what a magnificent fraud I was. It intrigued and amused him that I should be in reality Terry O'Flaherty.

Surely there has never been a stranger courtship than ours. I deliberately set out to marry Beldon Davies knowing that he didn't love me. But I amused him, interested him and I had money! That was important! I wasn't fooling myself any! I knew that if I had been just plain Teresa O'Flaherty without the money, I wouldn't have stood a chance. But I had a good business; I was making money hand over fist. Dave could buy polo ponies; he needn't be tied down. He would like that.

I guess I didn't have much pride. You don't sometimes when you're in love. I'd known so few men, and those few hadn't been alike. My father, Papa Chevalier, Mark Horman. I'd never had a boy friend, never been in love. I'd never had much fun either. Dave was like someone from a different world. The fact that he was a sort of glorified gigolo didn't matter.

His gaiety and the warmth of his charm made my pulses quicken. My throat closed when I saw him and my heart tightened painfully each time I thought of him. If this was love, it was unreasoning, aching, dreadful, wonderful. . . . Humbly, without pride or shame, I was willing to lay everything I had at his feet. He must have known it. I don't see how he could help it. And when, finally, casually, he asked me to marry him, he must have known what my answer would be.

It was a characteristic proposal. Sitting there in my apartment one night he said abruptly: "I shall probably make a lousy husband, Terry, but if you'd like to have a man around—purely as an ornament,

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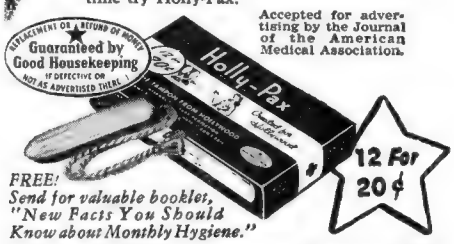

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because I warn you that I'm not useful—I'd like to put in my application."

I said steadily: "If you don't mean it, you'd better withdraw it quick. Otherwise it's accepted."

I thought that just belonging to him would be enough. That even knowing he loved Estelle wouldn't matter. I thought that he would get over that and that after awhile, I would give him so much of myself and the success that I had worked so hard to achieve, that he would forget Estelle. He might even, I dreamed wildly, grow to love me. Even if I wasn't as beautiful as Estelle, I had made myself into a personage. I was clever, witty, amusing, successful . . . Surely I could hold him!

But I think that even six months of marriage taught me that was not enough. Perhaps in my heart I knew it from the start . . . that first night . . . our wedding night . . . Mine was the lonely, aching, yearning tragedy of my love for him and behind his there was—nothing!

It never changed. It was always that way. He was never really mine. I continued to work—continued to be the successful Therese. I bought him the polo ponies he wanted, also a speedboat. I worked a little harder to do it, raised the prices of my gowns. My customers were wealthy; they could afford to pay it. I knew that behind my back, Dave's friends laughed. They knew Dave. He needed a wife like me—one who was generous, not too demanding. Perhaps they felt a little sorry for me, too, knowing Dave. But they didn't need to. Fiercely, eagerly, I clutched what little I had of him and I gave eagerly.

We had fun together sometimes. At least he never pretended to be anything but what he was—charming, selfish, lazy. We laughed together because he liked laughter and he never knew how near the surface my tears were.

I had but two interests in life. The Therese salon and Dave. I scarcely knew there was a war going on. Certainly I never thought that it could effect me. But after Pearl Harbor things grew more difficult. Women weren't buying as many clothes. There wasn't as much money as there had been in the old days. People were buying War Bonds; taxes were going up; women weren't as clothes-conscious and many of them were wearing uniforms.

I tried not to let Dave see how things were in the business. I knew, terribly and desperately, that my only hold on him was my success. I never talked my problems over with him. He wouldn't have cared or understood.

But now, the restless, reckless spirit of this man I had married found a sudden outlet. I had thought fearfully of the draft but Dave didn't wait for the draft. He came back to the apartment one evening and tossed his hat into the corner. Tipping back my head he kissed me as only Dave could kiss.

"Guess what," he said. "Davies is in the Marines. Passed a recruiting station today and it sounded like hot stuff. I leave for Quantico, which is a joint somewhere in Virginia, tomorrow."

My fingers clenched. My body felt cold all over like bodies must when death seizes them. "Why didn't you let me know?" I asked through stiff lips. "Or is this a gag?"

His gray eyes regarded me with surprise. "Why should I have let you know?" he asked. "I didn't know it myself, as a matter-of-fact. I just suddenly decided it would be a good stunt. I'm pretty well fed up with life as it is, anyhow. I need a work-out, excitement. I understand these boys get it."

"I thought you were having a pretty good life," I said unsteadily. "I didn't know you were fed up."

"Oh, come, Terry!" he said wearily. "Let's not have any stuff at the end. That's why I've liked you. There has never been any pretense between us. We're both realists. We've both taken what life has given us and dispensed with the sentiment. You have your life—your interests. That Therese gag has gone over with a bang. But I've gotten a little fed up with the racket."

"I see," I whispered. "Okay, Dave. Goodby and good luck. Write when you have time."

He breathed a sigh of relief and coming over lifted my head and kissed me again. It was a gentle kiss. His lips were friendly and cool. I wanted to lash out at him—to scream at him like a fish wife. I wanted to hate him for what he had done to me and my life, but I couldn't. I could only keep on loving him—painfully, dreadfully, just as I had done from the first day Estelle Leighton-Randolph had brought him into the shop.

So this was the end. I should have known that it was coming—that I couldn't hold him. He had been restless, bored, for a long time. Joining the Marines was a way out. He had never gotten over Estelle, really. Estelle, who was now Mrs. John Perthwell and more beautiful than ever in her furs and diamonds and lovely clothes—none of which were now purchased at Therese's!

AND so I let him go. After that nothing seemed to matter. Business was shot and I didn't care. Most of my wealthiest customers were wearing Red Cross Volunteer or American Women's Voluntary Service uniforms during the day and making their last year's evening and dinner gowns do for the occasions they needed them. It was now considered the smart thing to do. My debutante trade had gone into war activities even more seriously than that. Many of them were WAVES or WAACs or SPARS. Many were working in defense factories. It wasn't considered good form to squander money on exclusive models any more.

I looked around my apartment—the sun-flooded drawing room that had been a background for my acquired personality. The white walls, white curtains and priceless Chinese objects d'art in white and green jade. I looked around my salon. It would all have to go.

I thought wryly: Dave was right. It was a good racket while it lasted. I thought of my father and all his wild schemes and business ventures that had failed. And I had thought that I was so smart!

I had let my maid go. My chauffeur, too. No one could keep a car these days, anyhow. There was nothing left. I was practically broke.

There would have been money in the bank because I had made plenty of it, but Dave had been an expensive luxury. I sold his polo ponies and his speed boat. I paid the bills he had left—and there were plenty of them, too. I hated to see the salon go. It had been the only thing that had ever been really mine. I knew that when the shoppe went, Therese would go, too, and nothing would be left but Teresa O'Flaherty.

Everything was sort of frozen up inside of me. I didn't cry. You can't when you're dead and I might just as well have been dead.

Mark Horman asked me to come back to the store. "There's always a place for you, both there or in my life," he told me.

"I've never gotten over you, Terry, because I never knew anyone like you before."

He knew about Dave, of course. Everybody did and felt sorry for me. I think they all knew why Dave had married me; that I had caught him on the rebound and that he had wanted an easy berth. Now they knew that he was bored and had taken one way to get out.

I didn't want to go back to the store. I didn't want to stay in New York at all. New York had belonged to Therese and Therese was dead. All that had held her together had proved meaningless and empty. New York reminded me of Dave —of the gay places we had gone together, of our laughter and my love. I wanted to get as far away from New York as possible and from the people who had known me as Therese.

I thought of a little house we had once lived in in Texas before my father died. My mother had been happy there and so had I. She had thought my father was settled at last and she had put up checked curtains at the kitchen window and there had been a flower garden and a dog and chickens and a cow.

If I could find a little house like that, I thought—a little house where you could bring up a child to know peace and permanance and happiness. Because that was the secret I had been keeping—the secret I couldn't even tell Dave, because he would have thought it was a trap. He would have hated it and me. Dave wasn't the type to be moved by the thought of a woman knitting tiny garments. He just wasn't the father type, I thought, and I wanted to burst into terrible, hysterical laughter.

I was a fool and had no one to blame but myself. This was a net of my own weaving and I had been caught in it. But at least I would never be alone again. I would have Dave's child and I would try to give it the kind of childhood I had never known.

I still had my foolish emeralds and pearls. They would pay for my trip and for the kind of little house I had in mind.

I hadn't heard from Dave. I hadn't expected to. It was like him to walk casually out of a boring situation and think nothing more of it. He probably expected me to get a divorce. But before I left New York, I understood part of Dave's attitude and it only added to my bitterness. Estelle was divorcing her husband and getting a very generous settlement. Perhaps Dave had known this. Perhaps he had been seeing Estelle. Now they could be married when I freed Dave.

I carried that bitterness back with me to Texas. Yes, that is where I went! It's a little funny, isn't it? Teresa O'Flaherty going back where she started.

I found a little house, too. There are lots of little houses in Texas. This one was right outside of the town where we had lived when my mother died and where Papa Chevalier had had his restaurant. It had a garden and soon it had a dog and some chickens. After that, I didn't have so much time to be bitter. You don't when there are gardens to be weeded and hoed and planted and chickens to be cared for and trees to be pruned and a house to be put in order. I found a little Mexican girl to help me and after the baby was born I intended to start a little dressmaking business.

If it hadn't been for the thought of Dave, I think I would have been happier than I had ever been in my life. This little house was mine—much more so than my swanky Therese Salon had ever been, because now there was no pretense, no disguise. Stripped of all my glamour, I was Terry O'Flaherty again and I felt washed and clean and almost contented. And yet I seemed always to be waiting—but for what, I did not know. I kept wondering about Dave. Where was he? What was he doing? All the while I knew what a fool I was for caring.

The weeks slid into months. Finally, my baby was born . . . a baby so ridiculously like Dave that it was exquisite torture to look at him. I named him Beldon Davies Junior. That much at least I could keep.

I went back to the little house and back to work in my garden. I had something to work for now. I took in sewing, just as my mother had done before me. People were pleased with the clothes I made them and they never knew, these wives and daughters of ranchers and oil men and grocery store clerks and farmers, that I had once been the highest-priced designer in New York. I tried not to think or plan for the future. I knew that I must divorce Dave—but I kept putting it off.

Then one night I picked up the paper and saw his picture! WOUNDED HERO RETURNS FROM BATTLE IN PACIFIC, it said. And went on: "*Lieutenant Beldon Davies, young Marine Corps officer, former New York socialite has been sent back to this country after having lost a leg and suffered other injuries in battle. Lieutenant Davies has been decorated for unusual heroism.*

"Dave!" I whispered. "Dave!" All the hours I had spent with him crowded at me. The gay sound of his voice, the grayness of his eyes, the bright blond of his

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hair, the strength of his arms, the life in him!

I went into town that night. I sent a wire to the Marine Corps Headquarters. It was a simple wire. I requested that Lieutenant Beldon Davies be told that his wife's address was the following—and I gave it.

I thought desperately: Now it is up to him. Either he'll come or he won't. Perhaps he'll write and ask for his divorce. That's what he'll probably do. But I had to do it . . . oh, Dave . . . Dave!

I hadn't much hope. Why should he want me now when he never had before? I had nothing at all to offer him now. Nothing but Dave Junior. I was stripped of all glamour—off all the things that had made Therese charming and fascinating.

I couldn't believe it myself when Dave came. He walked stiffly because he had an artificial leg, and he hadn't gotten used to it yet but he was just the same. A little older-looking perhaps—but just the same. Only now he wasn't tilting his head back, looking from under his lashes and grinning. He was staring at me as though he had never seen me before. He was looking at the little house with a puzzled frown.

"What gives here?" he demanded. "Why did you just drop from the face of the earth and not let any one know where you were? I've written you hundreds of letters—cabled you—almost had the whole Marine Corps looking for you. I thought you'd just walked out on me."

All I could say was: "Oh, Dave!" And then I began to laugh and cry and act just like a woman. He'd never seen me like that before. He grabbed me in his arms and he said hoarsely: "Shut up. You hear me! Shut up." And then he was kissing me—hungrily, eagerly. Dave! I couldn't believe it. I thought that I must have died and gone to heaven.

I took him into the little house and he met Dave Junior and he looked frightened and swore a little and then he looked wonderingly from the baby to me and back again to the baby. He couldn't take his eyes off of Dave Junior, but he acted like he was afraid to touch him.

Over and over he said softly: "You mean this is my kid, Terry? My kid! Well, what do you know about that?"

And then somehow I was in his arms again and he was kissing me over and over and telling me incoherently how beautiful and wonderful I was, and that he had to get away to realize what a heel he was, and that in the middle of nowhere with shells and grenades exploding all around him, the only thing he could think of was holding me in his arms and getting back to me to show me how different he could be if he wanted to be, and wanting to tell me that from now on he was going to take care of me . We were going to settle down and have a baby and a house like some of the other guys had left behind them and live a normal life without any of the artificial trimmings.

"And here it all is—just like I planned it would be. Only it's here—now—" he said wonderingly and held me out to stare at me. "And gosh, you're beautiful," he groaned. "I want to eat you up."

I couldn't get over it. If this was a dream, I never wanted to wake up. This was Dave and yet it wasn't Dave—and this couldn't possibly be me—because he was telling me how beautiful I was!

That night when he lay stretched out and relaxed in the bed in the little room that had been my lonely haven, I got up softly and crept into the bathroom where I could light the light and stare at myself in the medicine cabinet mirror. Dave thought I was beautiful—just as I was—and he had never told me that when I was Therese!

I looked at myself. Working in the garden had brought out my freckles again. My hands were rough from pulling weeds and from needle-pricks. I had put on weight and there was a new expression on my face that I hadn't noticed myself. I had always thought that I was homely but I wasn't, really. I was pretty and if Dave thought I was beautiful, that was all right, too. Maybe I was! I didn't need all the trappings of Therese, after all.

The next day Dave and I talked and talked. We had to keep touching each other and talking because we had so much wasted time to make up for. Dave said: "I wasn't a man, I was a parasite. That was one of the things that made me pull out. I couldn't stand myself any longer. I was pretty disgusted. It took a war to show me that you needn't run away to change things. I got to thinking about you, too, and that under all that veneering you were one of the realest people I knew. I knew that I was the one who should have found that realness. I kept writing you letters—all the things that I was thinking. But no one knew where you were, not even Mark Horman. He said if he had he would have gone after you himself and he told me all the things about myself that I had found out already, so I didn't bust him in the nose. I just thanked him kindly and agreed with him."

"Estelle? What about Estelle?" I asked finally

"Well, what about her?" he asked and there was such wild sweetness and hunger in his kiss that I knew the answer before he told me. "I knew the answer to that one," he said. "when I began to dream of holding you in my arms. I never dreamed about holding Estelle. I never dreamed of her at all!"

"Why, Dave!" I murmured and giggled against his shoulder.

So that's the story of Therese and Terry O'Flaherty, who is, after all, only Mrs. Beldon Davies of Texas.

I'm not sewing any more. Dave makes the living for the family these days. He is still in the Marines, but because of his leg he has a job in the recruiting branch. Evenings he works around the little garden and we're both just about as happy as a family can be. Drop in and see us if you're down this way.

♥ ♥ ♥ ♥

Mirrors Don't Lie

When somebody new
With blandish a-plenty
Murmurs "Don't tell me you
Have a daughter of twenty!"

Such flattery brings
An enchanting glow
But while my heart sings,
I know what I know!

—*May Richstone*

SALVAGED "little things" HELP SAVE LIVES

Don't Ever Worry, Darling

[CONTINUED FROM PAGE 40]

here—" I recognized the production co-ordinator as a man I'd met years before at an engagement reception. Noticing my eyes on him, he suddenly crossed the employment office.

"Hello, shouldn't I know you?" His broad forehead wrinkled a bit, as his warm dark eyes looked down. "You look familiar. Going to work with us?"

I smiled. "Yes, I'm going to work here." I nodded. "Perhaps you remember me because I met you at the Rollinses years ago. I was Mary Foster before my marriage—Mary Howard now. I used to live near here."

His eyes lit up, and he shook hands, laughed: "Well, it's always nice to meet a native of the state. There are so many outsiders here now." After a little more talk, he excused himself and rushed off.

I HAD a more intimate glimpse of him before I had been at the defense plant office a week. They were teaching me the arrangement of folders in the big files then, but being unable to locate a messenger, my supervisor sent me to the co-ordinator's office with a set of blue-prints.

The gray-haired secretary asked me to wait a moment while she wrote a note. Just then the door of the co-ordinator's office opened from the inside. And suddenly to my startled ears, breaking the serenity of the office sounds, came a barrage of furious words:

"Work, work, work! I'm sick of listening to your excuses for neglecting me, Ned! You promised to take me to the County League ball tonight, and no silly conference is going to interfere—do you hear me?" The shrill feminine voice was accompanied by the stamp of a foot. "I *insist* that you take me! I—"

"Please, Clarissa—" A man's voice, inexpressibly weary, cut in. "I can't slip up on a job vital to war production to go dancing! Darling, can't you try to understand? If only you'll be patient until we get this organization running smoothly, I'll have a little more time. If only you'll wait—"

"Wait?" It was a scream of rage.

"Wait until I'm a wrinkled old hag, I suppose!" Again a foot stamped furiously. "No other man ever dared to treat me as you do! I wish I'd married someone who appreciated me—but I'll fix you for treating me like an old shoe! I'll leave you, Ned Stanton! Yes, I'll leave you!"

She threw the door wide then, and came flying through. She was a girl a little older than myself: the bright spots of rage on her cheeks and the anger pulling her lips tight spoiled her beauty, but even so she was a spectacular woman! Golden curls shown beneath a sparkling sequin hat; a diamond brooch flashed beneath a mink coat, as her stilt-like heels rapped past us and out into the hall.

My glance leapt from her to the man standing in the doorway. Queer how much you can see in a moment like that. A man's enslavement to a beautiful woman; in the eyes, a desperate wish to dash after her and make things right again. For a moment he didn't even see us. Then he did and flushed. He said with an effort at calmness:

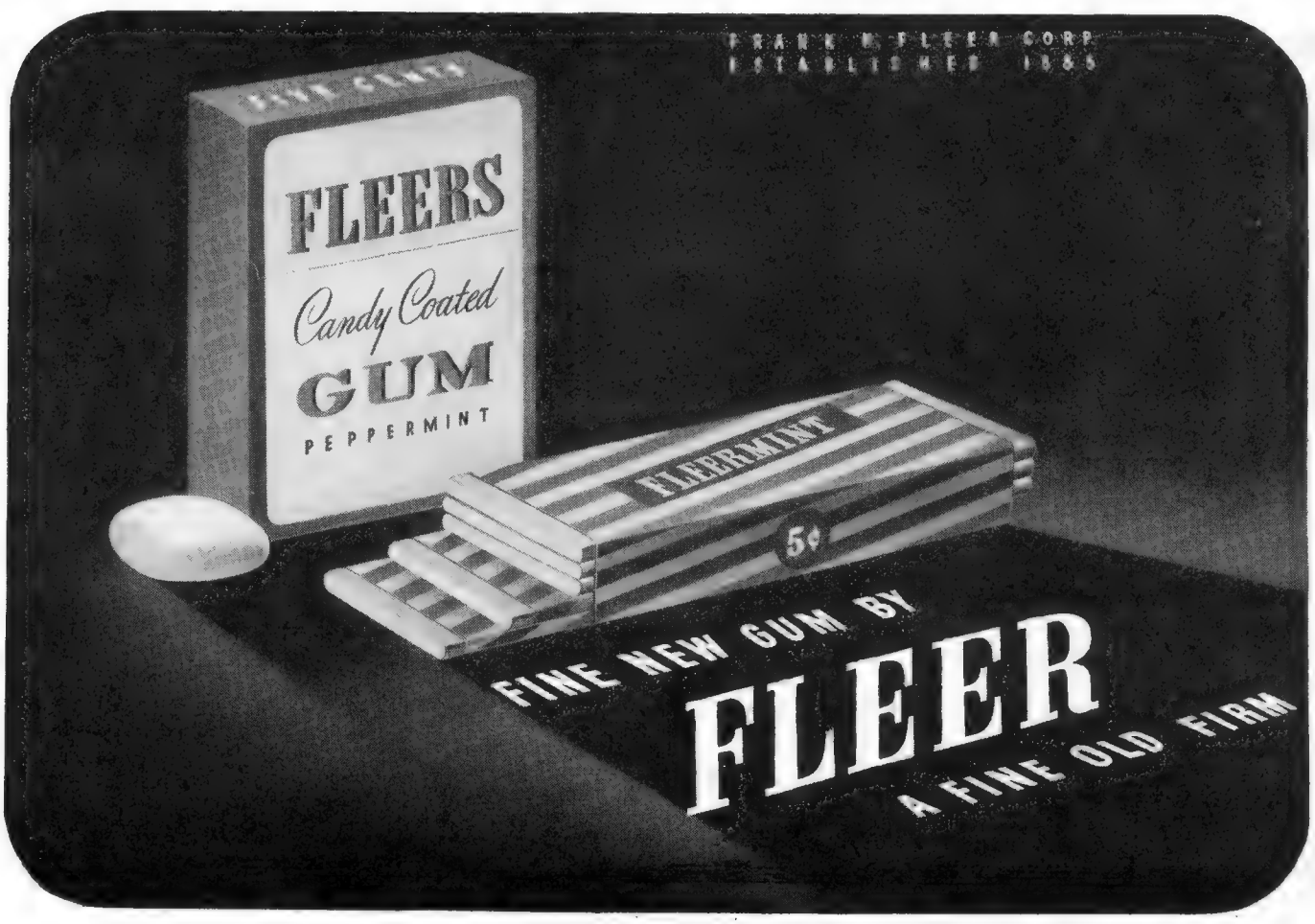
"Oh, hello, Mrs. Howard. I hope you're getting along all right." The door closed behind him.

As soon as I got my first pay check I took Lance shopping for clothes, since he was wearing hand-me-downs donated by neighbors after the fire. I had to find a school that wasn't too overcrowded to take both Lance into his grade, and Susan into kindergarten. The problem of in-between hours was solved when a teacher told me that youngsters of war-workers could play on the grounds after school and all day Saturdays, with supervision.

I had to hunt living-quarters, because Mrs. Roland's young son would return Sunday to the room we had occupied and all her other rooms were taken by relatives engaged at the defense plant.

Never shall I forget trudging the streets of that overcrowded town! Instinctively I went to the kind of places I was used to at first, seeking a couple of rooms and bath. The price of apartments dazed me. My feet went on, to clean little houses—but a single room in such a home cost ten and twelve dollars a week, without running water or cooking facilities!

The best I could afford was in a dilapidated house down past the railroad tracks—a dreary second-floor front room, with tattered curtains at the one window overlooking the street. I paid a week's rent,



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LIFE STORY MAGAZINE

went out, returned with a scrubbing brush, scouring powder, soap and disinfectant.

I learned how the other half lives! I peeled off my fur coat, my fine silk dress, and went to work on that room in my slip. I scrubbed every stick of furniture, the floor, even the walls. Would Johnny hate me if he knew of my taking our dainty Susie there? Could we keep our health, three human beings crowded together on the cots the landlady had promised to bring in place of the one big bed? Dusk had fallen when I finally sat down with every muscle aching.

I tried to keep back the tears of weakness and fatigue as I cleaned myself to return for the children.

We moved on Sunday. Monday morning, after taking the children to the school near by, I went to work. I was nervous and unsure of myself, and fearful of failing to make good.

But I didn't fail. In two weeks, though still nervous, I had begun to fit in and to get acquainted.

One day as I left the building, it poured. As I came abreast of the boss's car, he called out, without recognizing me,

"Want a lift? Hop in before you drown."

When he saw it was I, we talked impersonally.

I asked him to let me off at the North school, since the children would be playing indoors on this rainy day. At the mention of children, he asked about my husband—and so learned of Johnny's enlistment. He said softly:

"You've given a husband; you're doing useful work instead of sitting idle; and you're tending two children." He stared through the wet windshield then, murmuring as if to himself: "Women can be wonderful."

I knew he was thinking of his wife. That beautiful girl I had seen raging out of his office because he neglected her social life for his job. A deep sympathy for this tired, kindly man swept over me for an instant.

"There's the school, Mr. Stanton. Don't wait—I'll have to help Susan with her rubbers and things," I said.

I learned later that that was the evening Ned Stanton found his home empty. Clarissa Stanton had carried out her threat to leave him, no doubt sure in her vanity that he would follow her and beg her to return on any terms. The office buzzed with speculation the following week.

I hardly felt rested after my one day free! I never felt rested any more. The alarm dragged me half-dead from my bed at six-thirty every morning. Jumping up I took my shower in the ancient second-floor bathroom. I roused the children; cooked breakfast. Then the dishes had to be done; the room tidied with the help of sad-faced but responsible little Lance. We'd take down the make-shift clothes line and garments washed the night before. At eight-thirty, immaculate and shining, we left the house together—three musketeers, two of them little children.

My day continued for sixteen hours. Until around eleven at night when I stumbled into bed, body and brain melted into one dull lump of exhaustion.

It didn't occur to me that I might be taxing my body too much. When I found I'd lost six pounds within a month I thought, what of it? Thousands of soldiers were risking their lives. My husband's letters now came to me from an embattled Pacific island. Lines from those letters would come to mind, during any hour of the day or night. . . .

We had quite a tussle last night. Japs came swarming up the beach like rats out of a barrel. Their machine guns splattered bullets everywhere. Bill Coonan got it in the arm, and Briggs, down behind the sandbags with us, is gone.

We'll pay them off for Hep, by God! He was just eighteen. And only yesterday he was excited as a kid because his sis wrote that their Irish setter had had pups.

How my heart burned, reading those letters. Johnny would write of his love, of our years together, of jokes the men invented about their hardships. But, though he never went into the horrors of war, I knew what he faced.

Understanding the things he was going through brought him nearer to me, somehow. It gave me a little share in his life and dangers; brought him close and precious across the thousands of miles between us.

Once he wrote:

Your letters seem kind of odd, Mary, almost as if you were slipping away. You aren't keeping anything from me, are you?

I took added pains to put in little details of what the children said and did after that. It was difficult to make my letters sound full and complete, though, while hiding all the main facts of our lives, with which I had resolved not to worry him.

I didn't see my mistake, in letting those months go by without telling him the facts.

And then I got a raise. The chief file clerk told me that I had certain qualities which would make me valuable in a better job—dignity, and a knack for soothing new and nervous girls. I knew the filing system well by then, too. So they made me an assistant at training beginners with a ten dollar a week raise!

That meant I could get the children clothes they needed. And later I thought that we'd be able to find a better place to live!

I made up my mind I'd write Johnny everything as soon as I had bettered our conditions. Then it would all be behind me and Johnny would have nothing to worry about.

Only our problems weren't over. When I went out to look for new living quarters, I found that rents had risen higher. I still believed I'd be able to find two little rooms somewhere that I could afford by extra scrimping—going without lunches, wearing darned-up hosiery.

But the weather conspired against me. Rain set in, and I caught cold. I'd never been subject to them, and when I did catch one, it had always passed off lightly. But not this time. I felt terribly drained of strength. I felt too utterly worn out to drag myself from bed in the morning; and each day seemed a week long.

About the fourth day of my cold I called for the children at school and found eight-year-old Lance sniffling.

To prevent him from developing a real illness, I had him stay at home the next day. Sick and guilty at leaving him alone, trustworthy child though he was, I fixed his lunch and made him as comfortable as I could.

"Aunt Mary, I'll be all right!" he said.

He was—but I wasn't.

I fainted that afternoon at the office. My eyes opened on Ned Stanton pushing his way through the circle around me. "You'd better see the doctor, Mrs. Howard," he said as soon as I could sit up, "and then I'll take you home."

He took me to the factory doctor, and waited while I was with the physician. After a careful examination the doctor said gravely:

"You are very badly run down, young lady. If you want to avoid a breakdown, you must pay strict attention to your health!" He told me I must gain at least ten pounds, get more rest, eat plenty of good steaks and body-building food, take a tonic, vitamin concentrates—

My hope of moving from our dismal room died. If my health broke, Susan and Lance would be thrown on public charity.

Despairingly I came out, a prescription in my hand. Ned Stanton stood up. "Hadn't you better take a week or two off?" he suggested.

"I can't—I need the pay," I murmured shakily.

He looked surprised, but took my arm without comment. He had probably been judging me by my clothes, bought in more prosperous days. Now he drove to my dilapidated rooming-house, and looked startled. He helped me from the car, and up to our room.

Lance opened the door—and my boss was staring at the crowded cots, the one window, the gas-plate atop the oil-cloth covered table.

"Surely there must be a better place than this for you, Mrs. Howard—even in a defense town!" he exclaimed in consternation.

I SANK down on a straight-backed chair. "Not for what I can pay. Not even with the raise, if I'm to follow the doctor's orders."

"But you can't stay crammed in this room with two children! It's inhuman!" Ned Stanton's brow furrowed. "Have you tried the new community house?"

"They have a list a mile long of people who want to get in! You're kind, Mr. Stanton, but there's really nothing to be done."

"But you and the boy have colds. How long will it be before your little girl comes down with one?" He paced across the room and back, then paused, his face suddenly brightening:

"Wait a minute—I've got a whole big house, with only myself, and my sister keeping house for me! Why couldn't you move in there?" He was suddenly excited. "Why only yesterday Grace was saying that it's a crime to have the rooms unused! She adores children, too, and—say you'd be able to get some rest, Mrs. Howard! You could pay whatever it costs you to live here, and just help Grace out a bit—"

Oh, it was a lovely dream all right! I recalled Grace Stanton, his sister, as a kindly spinster whom I vaguely remembered at the reception. There was just one flaw: Abruptly I interrupted him:

"But, Mr. Stanton! It would cause gossip."

I had never seen him angry before. But suddenly he was. "No decent person would gossip, in war time, in time of emergencies," he exclaimed. Everyone knew that housing conditions were appalling, since the defense plant opened! And the health of working mothers was of the utmost importance!

The conventionalities of a lifetime rose to my lips in argument. He considered my arguments silly when balanced against my health and the children's welfare.

He couldn't have ever convinced me, alone. But he brought his sister. He left our place with a determined set to his chin, to return a half hour later with plump, middle-aged Grace in tow. Yes, she remembered me as Mary Foster and spoke to me as to an old neighbor.

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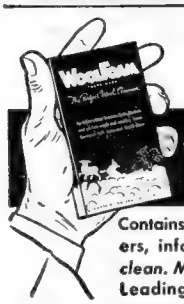

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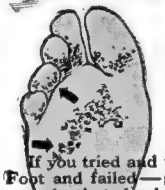

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"My brother's perfectly right, Mary. With things as they are, this is no time to stand on convention." She said a great deal about my duty to the children, myself, and my absent husband; the duty to keep well enough to work—she repeated all that Ned had said.

And so, over my inner doubts, I yielded. We moved into the Stanton home, bag and baggage that night. . . . It was one more thing I didn't tell Johnny, for I couldn't bring myself to write that my health was in a precarious state, and so skipped the whole business in my letters to him.

THINGS went well after our move. Ned was right about people not going in for petty gossip in such circumstances. After one wild flutter of curiosity at the office, the girls accepted my explanation and said it was a lucky break for me.

Grace allowed me to do only the bedroom work mornings, saying housekeeping was her only contribution to the war effort. So I did have a little more time to rest, and good meals waiting for me—and the color came back to my cheeks.

The children delighted in their new home, adored Ned and Grace, and soon we were like a happy family. Seeing all the things a working mother had to do, admiration and sympathy for me grew stronger by the day in Ned Stanton. A matching sympathy for him took root within me. Grace told me how unhappy Clarissa had made him, almost from the time of their marriage.

"She's walked out on him before," Grace said, "always knowing he'd go after her and agree to anything to get her back."

I understood that torn look in Ned's face when he stood looking at the portrait of his wife. He still wanted to go after her—but he didn't. I think the pleasure he took in the children strengthened his decision, for they poured out affection on him as youngsters will. The big home had become a house of warmth and friendship. I would have been quite happy there, but for one thing.

My husband's letters stopped coming! At first I thought it a mistake at the post office; that they were forgetting to forward them from my old address. But it wasn't, as repeated trips there proved. There simply were no letters. He had written every day while in America, then at least once a week. Now nine—ten—eleven days went by with no news.

Fear dawned, and grew. It interfered with my sleep. I got out of bed at night; threw on a robe and paced the hall or roved down the stairs and through the lower rooms. Coming home from some late meeting, Ned would find me there. Out of my need for comfort, and his sympathy, our friendship deepened.

"It's really only two weeks since you heard from him, Mary," he'd say gently, "and a letter might be lost at sea you know. Then too, he might not be able to write—" At last, soothed and comforted, I could go upstairs and sleep.

Then came the black Saturday which plunged me into sudden torment, and an aftermath of hell!

At dinner Grace announced that there was a party over in Longdale, and she wanted to catch the eight o'clock train. Since there wasn't a train returning that evening, she planned to spend the night with her friends there.

The children, bathed before dinner and already in night clothes happily demanded that Uncle Ned take them up to bed. I began the dishes, and soon he returned to help me. We talked awhile, as I mended. Then, pleading weariness, he went upstairs.

As my needle went in and out I thought of Johnny—my mind fighting against nagging fear. I wouldn't let those movie newsreels flash before me; I wouldn't listen to that horrible sound of cannons that roared in my ears. I'd just let John's dear image stand before me—the broad shoulders, the brave blue eyes.

A tear ran down my nose. I'd have given my soul just to hear his voice. I picked up the paper to distract my mind. Turning the pages my eyes found the list of the missing in action on the Pacific Islands.

My eyes wavered down the alphabet: Atkins . . . Bainter . . . Durkee . . . Farnum . . . Then a name leapt out like a sword:

Jonas Howard, Aberdeen, South Dakota

It must be Johnny, Jonas—a misprint for John. Johnny had enlisted from Aberdeen.

A queer dull little moan sounded in my lips. Then I was running up the stairs; stumbling blindly on my long housecoat, rapping desperately on Ned's door. As he opened it, I gasped:

"It's J-Johnny! Oh, Ned, he's...d-dead!"

"Don't faint, Mary! Here—" He pulled me into the room, dashed to his bathroom for a glass of water, and returning, held it to my lips.

Ned comforted me as best he could in my mortal anquish. His arms were gentle around me, as a brother's or a father's.

"Cry, Mary, go ahead and cry! You've been brave enough," he entreated as he pressed his head to my shoulder.

My tears rolled onto the shoulder of his robe. How could we think, in such a moment, of the light on in the room, and our silhouettes against the window shade? I clung to him in my awful grief.

"I wish it could have been me, instead of your Johnny, Mary!" he said huskily. "It wouldn't matter so much to anyone. I'm going to enlist, Mary, as soon as we get things properly organized at the plant."

It was then that a faint disturbance on the balcony outside the open rear window reached my ears. That faint clicking noise. Those little sounds register yet. In my hour of agony, there was no inkling that another woman, wild with wounded vanity, jealous spite, and greed, would choose that moment for her revenge.

Later, when I was calmer, Ned telephoned a wire to the war department in Washington, giving my name in signature.

All day Sunday I prayed. Monday, I was a wreck. I stayed home from work. Just after noon the answer came from Washington. Jonas Howard of Aberdeen was a boy twenty-two years old. Single . . .

It was cruel that my joy was at the cost of some poor mother's pain. But my heart cried a hymn of prayer and thanksgiving. It wasn't my Johnny.

Never had the trees outside the window been so green as they were that Monday, or the sky so blue. I felt as if I had a reprieve from death.

WE WERE happy that evening. Until once more a newspaper item struck a blow. Fortunately the children were already upstairs. Grace went for the paper when the newsboy's step sounded. Her cry of outrage brought Ned and me into the hall. Mutely she held the paper toward us so we could both see the headline.

CLARISSA STANTON FILES SUIT FOR DIVORCE.

Ned grabbed the paper. "Clarissa couldn't do such a thing . . . she knows I've never looked at another woman from the day we met!"

In a stony voice, he read aloud while I burst into tears:

Mrs. Clarissa Stanton today filed suit

for divorce against her socially prominent husband, Edward Stanton. Asking three hundred a month alimony, Mrs. Stanton named Mary Howard, a boarder in her husband's home, as co-respondent. She said her suspicions were aroused when she learned that her husband had taken the woman into their home during her absence from the city.

Those hideous words flowed over me like poison. I buried my face in my hands, too shocked and stunned to speak. Finally I choked,

"I've got to leave this house! I can't stay here with the children and have people believing such a thing!" My voice broke. "I've got to move now—tonight!" I cried wildly.

Ned and Grace wouldn't let me go. His hand reached out and caught my arm: "You can't, Mary! Don't you see, it would look like an admission of guilt? I got you into this mess, I know. But all we can do now is tell the truth . . . I'll never forgive Clarissa for involving you in this, Mary! She'll have to drop her case. She won't dare take such a charge into court, with no evidence, no grounds for it!"

Despite my sick horror, I was reassured. Clarissa Stanton *couldn't* have evidence. Ned and I were innocent. Surely the town would believe more readily in my innocence if I stayed right here, and held my head high, than if I ran out—

I stayed. But going to work the day after that story appeared was the hardest experience of my life. I rode to work with Ned the same as always. I saw the amazed eyes of workers on me, as I stepped out.

"Chin up, Mary!" Ned whispered grimly as we parted. But oh! How sharply I felt the sidelong glances of girls who yesterday had accepted me as one of them; and the sudden hush of whispers as I passed one little group after another!

It went on, day after day. Grace went all out for me, broadcasting her opinion of Clarissa to her friends in the town. Yet whenever I walked along a street, people stared. Former acquaintances greeted me with haste, or coolness that brought the color stinging to my cheeks. Maybe they were withholding judgment, but all the same, I walked under a cloud of scandal and suspicion.

Ned's wife didn't drop her divorce suit. He received notice that the case would be tried in a couple of weeks.

Then came the chilling, incredible statement that Clarissa claimed incontrovertible evidence of the charges against her husband.

None of my hardships, money loss, or struggle, had done to me what this did. The few pounds I had put on since moving to Ned's home melted away. I grew shockingly nervous; folders trembled in my hands at the office, as I went about my work. I jumped at the slightest sound. Tears rolled down my cheeks as I re-read old letters from Johnny.

Where was he? If only he could be with me now!

I sat down to write him one night, to pour out my heart, and finally to confide in him the facts I had withheld so long: *Dearest Johnny . . . I am in terrible trouble.*

Then my head went down on my arms. Even if he was to receive this, on some remote battlefield, what good could it do, when he couldn't come to me? It would only hurt Johnny, who loved me! Only torment him with his helplessness!

I tore the letter up. I was appalled suddenly to realize that in months of loneliness and longing, I had told my husband almost nothing of what was going on at home. He believed me to be still living on a secure income, devoting my-

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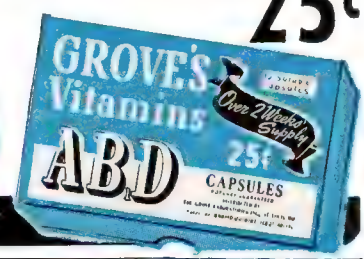

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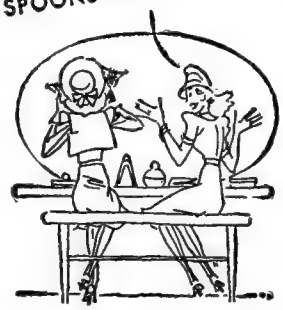

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self to washing the children's faces, and keeping myself smoothly beautiful.

The day of the trial came and it was like a dreadful nightmare, for almost at once Mrs. Stanton fired her gun—a picture of me in Ned's arms.

I remembered then the clicking sound on the balcony outside the window the night I thought Johnny had been killed.

How I got home that night, I'll never know. Ned and his lawyers tried to comfort me. Our turn to defend ourselves would come. The truth was bound to be believed.

Finally we were home and there, standing in the living room—there was Johnny! In uniform. One arm in a sling. Alive, and there! Even as I screamed his name, I hurled myself toward him. And then—Will I forget it to my dying day?—Johnny stepped back from me as though he couldn't bear my touch. His tight-lipped voice struck me like a lash.

"You can skip the act, Mary! Only one thing could have brought me to this place—I wanted to see Sue!"

My lips fell open, speechless with shock. I saw the whiteness of his face.

"God knows you're not the first wife to forget some dumb cluck that's halfway around the world fighting his brains out and worshipping you!"

My hand went up as if to ward off a blow. "Oh, Johnny, you can't believe this. You don't know—I never wrote you—"

His eyes flashed. "An innocent woman doesn't move into another man's house while her husband is gone. I saw the papers. I just came from the courtroom."

My voice rose in a frenzy of self defense:

"I moved here because there was nowhere else to move that I could afford! We were living in one room! Johnny, you've *got* to understand. Ned helped—he was *kind*, that's all!" My voice shook: "The night that picture was taken, I thought you were dead—"

"You thought I was dead! Well, doesn't that make everything dandy!" He laughed harshly, and sweeping me aside with one thrust of his arm, he strode out of the house.

For a moment I couldn't move. Then I ran after him. But when I got to the street, he was already in a taxi. Clutching a tree I stood with tears streaming down my face. That was Johnny, believing that awful thing of me . . .

Numbly I stumbled back into the house. Grace must have heard my sobs out in the kitchen because she came rushing in.

Crying like a demented woman, I told her what had happened. Ned came in, too, while the tears streamed down my face.

"I can't understand your husband not believing you, Mary. How can he be such a heel? I can't understand it—his letting you down after all you've been through. There must be some reason—"

I told him then, between sobs, how I had never told Johnny the truth. He thought I was still living safely on my income—and then he comes home and finds me living in another man's house, being named co-respondent in a sordid divorce. Is it any wonder he lost his head?

Feeling responsible for my trouble, Ned Stanton telephoned every hotel in Rennington and neighboring towns. Then in his car he began canvassing the rooming houses, on the trail of a soldier with a wounded arm. At two o'clock in the morning he located Johnny in a boardinghouse over in Hempstead.

When Johnny opened the door and saw him, he sprang at him. "Get out of here, Stanton! Before I kill you for what you've made of Mary!"

Johnny's fist caught Ned on the jaw, knocking him the length of the room before he could speak.

Finally Ned had been able to hold him, and managed to gasp, "You've got to listen to me, Johnny—"

And then Ned swore that the evidence Johnny had heard in court was a lie. Ned told me later that Johnny let him talk then. Finally Ned said. "Wait, Johnny, let me get Mary. Let her tell you the rest."

By this time it was nearly dawn. Johnny promised to wait in his room until Ned went to get me. Ned got back to the house just as Grace and I were at breakfast—at least I made believe I was eating although every mouthful choked me.

Ned burst into the room, his red, sleepless eyes blazing with triumph. "He believes it, Mary! He wants to see you! We don't have to be in court till ten o'clock. Come on, I'll drive you over. You have an hour to explain everything to him."

"Oh, Ned, you look terrible. Your jaw! You look as if you're dying on your feet."

"Don't quibble," Ned tried to joke. "Finish your breakfast while I take a quick shave and change my shirt . . ."

We got to the boardinghouse at nine o'clock. The landlady met us at the door. Johnny was gone. The landlady heard him leave several hours earlier.

For me that was the end.

Johnny hadn't believed Ned after all.

I DON'T remember much about the following hour while we drove to the court. My throat seemed swollen. My brain ticked out words like a horrible clock:

My husband would go back to war hating me. He would take all those bright lying letters with which I had woven this agony for us both, and tear them to shreds. They would flutter away on the wind.

Dearest Johnny, Susan and I are fine. Don't worry about anything, darling. . . .

We reached the court where the trial was to continue. Whispers sounded as we walked down the courtroom aisle.

The courtroom had been against us from the moment the case opened. Clarissa Stanton, sitting up in front with a handkerchief to her eyes, had the sympathy of the court; not I.

I sat there with hands clenched in my lap. My eyes burned. Waves of ice and fire rushed over me.

Today Clarissa took the stand. She looked angelic all in white. All through her testimony she kept pressing a handkerchief to her eyes. No one could have taken her for the same woman whom I had heard raging and screaming at Ned in his office that day because he put his defense job ahead of her social life.

No, she was saying, she hadn't believed it at first, when she heard her husband had taken a woman into her home. Yes, they had quarreled, but she had meant to come back. Then when she heard about that woman she hired a detective, hoping he would prove the whole thing untrue.

"The lying little wretch!" Grace murmured beside me.

But I could feel the wave of sympathy for Clarissa sweep over everyone.

It was burningly clear to me that I was to be Rennington's scarlet woman, when this case was over!

My nerves that had seemed numb and dead, leaped into live suffering again. The plaintiff's lawyer browbeat Ned when he testified. The judge over-ruled his lawyer's objections. Not a soul seemed to accept Ned's straightforward story. He told of that name on the missing in action list, of the simple human compassion

with which he had tried to comfort me—

A ripple of jeering laughter ran through the courtroom!

A nerve started twitching in my face. Grace was called. Clarissa's lawyer established her dislike for Clarissa—winning more sympathy. My terror mounted. My bones seemed to be turning to water.

I can't go up there! I thought wildly. A shudder ran over me. I can't defend myself. I can't speak! Oh, Susan—Lance—you'll suffer for this, too, but I can't struggle anymore. I'm beaten—finished—

Grace was stepping down. I was called.

I tried to stand up; I was trembling so, I could hardly see. A queer buzzing sounded in my ears. My eyes were on the witness chair. I was trying to move my paralyzed body toward it, and then someone was beside me.

"Mary!"

It was Johnny! There in the courtroom, he took me in his arms.

He didn't let me go but held my arm, walked beside me up to the witness chair.

Clarissa's lawyer leaned over me: "You're the woman Edward Stanton took into his home while his wife was gone?"

No one could intimidate me, now. "I'm Johnny Howard's wife!" I flashed, "And I haven't committed any crime!"

The judge leaned forward. "Let the witness tell her story in her own way. This isn't a criminal trial; it's a divorce case."

From the witness chair, I told my story to Johnny. It was into his eyes that I looked, as the story poured from my lips. The story I have told here.

I got down from the chair. Over my head I heard the judge denying Clarissa Stanton's petition for divorce. I heard her shrill cry of rage.

None of it mattered. For in just one minute, Johnny held me close to him in the circle of his unwounded arm!

"My darling Mary, can you ever forgive me?" Johnny murmured huskily into my ear. "Why didn't you write me what you were going through?" His voice was husky: "When I think of the way I've treated you! But I've been sick, Mary. I had malaria, as well as this infected arm wound—"

The fever had returned last night. That's why he couldn't make sense of what Ned was trying to tell him. He rushed out of the boardinghouse after Ned left and roved the streets. Finally he checked in at a hotel.

When he awoke, his head was clear and he had come to the court to find me.

We walked out of the courthouse together, into the bright summer day. We found a little two-room apartment that afternoon. Johnny had been made a sergeant, so it was now financially possible.

If I live to be a hundred, I shall never forget the sweetness of our reunion. Nor Johnny's words. Pushing the hair back from my face with an old sweet gesture, he murmured unbelievingly, holding me tight: "To think that between us, we almost destroyed our greatest gift—our love! People have to have faith in each other in wartime, Mary! That's where we both fell down."

Yes, I realized the truth of what he said. I hadn't had faith in Johnny. I had treated him like a child who couldn't stand hearing of trouble—rather than a husband who had a right to know what went on at home! I had paved the way for his doubts, making it impossible for him to have faith in me. From the first, I should have told him the whole truth about all that happened here at home.

That is what I do now. For after six wonderful weeks together, Johnny rejoined his battalion. He is in Africa now, and so, as it happens, is Ned Stanton. Right now my little Susan and Lance are playing outside, parading with an American flag; for today is the Fourth of July.

And I, as I support my children and care for them, am marching under a flag too. The banner of our love. On it are painted three watchwords:

Faith—Honesty—Courage!

♥ ♥ ♥ ♥

Faith Redeemed Me

[CONTINUED FROM PAGE 33]

persist. "Give me just one good reason."

"Because everyone should work to give his life some meaning, some purpose."

"Aw, Sandy," I said, "you sound like the Salvation Army, or something. By the way, the Walkers want us in for cocktails this afternoon."

She lifted her arm in a gesture of despair. "There it is again—the Walkers, cocktails. That's all we ever do with our days."

I pulled her to her feet, laughing, refusing to be serious. "This discussion has helped me to work up a fine thirst. Come on, sweet, let's get going."

EVENTUALLY, through Sandra's contriving, I had a position practically forced upon me. A friend of mine who was an executive in an airline company, egged on by my wife, offered me a post in their traffic department. I had to take it, but I was a little sore at Sandra for her interference.

The strange part about it, though, was that I actually grew to enjoy and take pride in my work. It was interesting and opened up so many avenues of knowledge that I found myself studying the geography and history and politics and customs of the countries to which our company flew its planes.

This did not stop the frequency of Sandra's and my quarrels, however. I was still a playboy at heart; and because I was young and strong, I could burn the candle at both ends—working by day and partying by night.

It was all too obvious as time wore on that Sandra was not happy. "Sky dear," she begged me one day, "let's stop this chasing around and settle down. Let's move out to the country and buy a home and have flowers and—and—" she blushed, but went on bravely, "children. I want a child. I want *our* child."

The thought of a new and alien flesh growing within and distorting my Sandra's lovely body was almost repugnant to me. "Good heavens, sweet," I exclaimed, "don't even talk of anything like that. Suppose something happened to you—"

"Thousands of women have babies and nothing happens to them. Sky, please."

I shuddered in genuine fright. "Let's not talk about it."

"But we've got to talk about it. I never dreamed you felt this way. I thought all people in love wanted children. It's the

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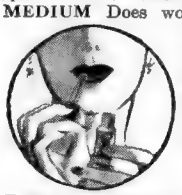

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normal, natural way for people to feel."

I said flippantly, "Sure, 'a boy for you and a girl for me.' Listen, sweet, I adore you just the way you are. I don't need something wet bouncing on my knee to make me happier."

She got up and walked over to the long French window that looked out over the East River and stood there, absent-mindedly running the Venetian blind up and down. "Sometimes I wonder why we married."

I strode after her and pulled her into my arms. "Shall I tell you why again?" I murmured against the soft fragrant flesh of her neck.

To my surprise she pushed her hands against my chest. "Don't. That only makes it worse, somehow. Kisses and hugs—is that all marriage means to you? A perpetual petting party?"

Angered, I released her. "Am I distasteful to you? Are you tired of me already?"

"No, Sky—"

I didn't wait to hear any more, but went out, slamming the door. We were due at the Hathaways' that evening for dinner, and arrived late, not talking to each other. I was heartsick and angry both, and behaved like a fool. I drank too much and got noisy and flirted with every woman there.

Around midnight I realized I hadn't seen Sandra in some time and went in search of her.

"Mrs. Halsey?" The maid said when I questioned her. "Why she went home long ago, sir."

Ashamed of myself, I hurried home after her and found her in our bedroom, her evening clothes changed to street wear, packing a suitcase.

"Sweetheart, I'm sorry," I said.

She lifted swimming eyes to mine and bit her lip. Her hands were trembling, but she never stopped putting things, one by one, into the open bag.

I reached out and took her hands and held them against my chest. "You can't leave me, Sandy. I couldn't live without you."

"I think you'll manage to struggle along," she answered bitterly.

"I'm sorry about tonight. I acted like a colossal fool, but you hurt me so this afternoon. You didn't seem to want me to touch you."

She sighed. "It isn't what happened this evening alone, Sky. It's—it's been brewing for months. We were never meant for each other. I knew it from the very beginning and tried to explain to you—we're worlds apart; our way of thinking, our slant on life. You love parties and gay times, and you don't want responsibilities. You're charming, Sky, but you're useless. I'm just the opposite, I'm serious-minded. I hate this tearing around, never taking root anywhere, never being quiet and alone."

"We can cut out the parties," I said eagerly.

She gave me a little smile. "You still don't understand. I'm not blaming you. You are what you are. I am what I am. It's like oil and water, Sky. You can't mix them. I want a quiet home and children. You'd go crazy with boredom after a month of it. No, it won't work. I'll never change to your ways, and I guess you'll never change to mine."

So Sandra walked out on me. I couldn't believe it. I kept thinking she was piqued at me for flirting with those girls at the Hathaways' and that after a few days I'd get a phone call telling me where she was and asking me to come and get her. I waited, hoping. The days slipped by and

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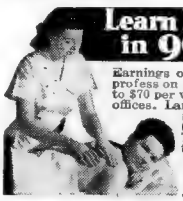

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became weeks. There was no message from Sandra.

I traveled to Boston where her folks lived and questioned them. It was apparent they knew of her whereabouts, but they refused to tell me. When it finally dawned on me that Sandra had meant what she said, I nearly went crazy.

I was in a cocktail bar on that Sunday afternoon of December Seventh when the radio first brought to the shocked ears of its listeners the news of the Jap bombardment of Pearl Harbor. I had been drinking quite steadily all that day in my effort to forget my wife.

"I'll enlist," was my first reaction to the news. "I hope I'm killed. Then she'll be sorry." Aloud, I addressed my companions, "Me for the nearest recruiting station."

"You'll come back with medals all over your chest," one of the girls laughed. "You'll parade up Broadway, and we'll all throw ticker tape at the conquering hero."

Later, I was to hear her words and recall that scene with painful clearness—the leather and chromium bar, the tinkling of ice in tall thin glasses, the perfume of the women, their slender bodies and luxuriant furs, the deep resonant laughter of the men—for it was all so typical of what my life had been up to that moment. My pockets were stuffed with money I had never had to earn. I had but to snap my fingers and a waiter jumped to my side. Shelter from the elements, warmth, food, drink, bodily comforts—ah, yes, I took those things for granted with no knowledge of what it felt like to be without; no premonition that some day I should have to learn.

I had done a little flying in college days, and my position with the airline company had augmented my interest in things aeronautical. It was, therefore, a natural sequence that I should join the Army Air Corps. They sent me to Florida to train, a place of painful memories for me for on that tropical soil my brief romance had flowered, brilliant and thrilling as a hibiscus flower—and as short-lived.

After I had earned my pilot's wings (from the beginning my instructors called me "a natural") I was assigned to a South Pacific base. Before leaving this country, I sent an air mail letter to Sandra, saying good-by. There was no reply, and I believed she was definitely through with me, a conviction that increased my recklessness.

I learned only long later that Sandra never received that letter. It was one of those letters that are lost, somewhere, and never turn up again.

I had been at this Pacific base for several months, when one day I received orders from my commanding officer that I was to pilot a certain Col. Edwards, who was arriving in the morning, on an important mission for the War Department inspecting air bases in the Pacific. It was to be a routine flight of about 1,900 miles or so to the southwest. There were four of us in the crew and our passenger, Col. Edwards.

WE STARTED off two days later in the early hours of the morning in fine spirits. The night sky was cloudless; the moon showed a new slender sliver of light. We traveled all night, and as morning dawned, began to look for the first signs of our destination. Just what went wrong in our calculations, we'll never know for sure, but as time slipped by and the gas in our tanks dropped lower and lower, still there emerged no outline of that tiny island for which we were seeking.

I have not the space here to detail the mounting suspense of the ensuing hours or the feverishness of our activities as we prepared for the inevitable crash. My hands were steady as I brought that Flying Fortress down and laid her into the trough of a wave and up against a swell as gingerly as though I were handling a can of dynamite. If we had hit the crest of the wave, our ship would have plunged to the bottom instantly.

As it was, we had barely time to escape through the hatch. Water was pouring in, through the windows and up through the floor. The colonel had released two rubber life rafts, but one of them failed to inflate and sank. I poised on the wing of the plane, hastily tore off my leather jacket and dove into the swelling waves of the Pacific.

AS I came up, I heard a shout and a few yards away saw Col Edwards in the raft, paddling toward Peterson, the co-pilot who was thrashing around desperately in the water. Before the raft could reach him, he sank and never came up again. I dove again and again, but could find no trace of him.

Slozak, the radio man, seemed to be in trouble and I swam over to him. He caught me in a drowning man's grip, and I had to knock him out before I could tow him to the raft. In the meantime, Kilpatrick, the navigator, had reached the rubber float, and Edwards had pulled him on.

Those rubber rafts, counting the narrow inflated roll that encircles them, are about nine feet by five. Since we were all better than average-sized men, we had scarcely room to move a foot.

Upon investigating, we discovered that only the colonel had had the presence of mind to pocket a flask of water just before the plane had crashed. There was about one-half pint of water between the four of us. Kilpatrick had a box of crackers in his pocket, but when he pulled them out we saw that his dip in the ocean had ruined them. Four men, one-half pint of water and no food!

As the shock of our rough landing and the chilly submersion in ocean waters wore off and our breath ceased to come in labored pants, we began to look around us and consider our position. Our tiny raft and we four souls clinging to her were less in this limitless waste of sea and sky than the tiniest speck of sand on the floor of the ocean.

Peterson, the co-pilot, was no longer with us. He had been a hearty virile man with whom I had spent many a pleasant comradely hour. It was impossible for my numb mind to accept the abrupt manner of his going or the fact that it was final. Any minute, I thought, I'll hear his voice and feel the clap of his hand on my shoulder.

The damnable part of our situation was that swimming in and swallowing some of the salt water had made us thirsty. Slozak in particular, who had swallowed more than the rest of us, became violently sick to his stomach. Our first brief flare of courage sputtered and died down.

Three of us were destined to spend almost four weeks on that raft. I have been asked many times what was the worst part of it all—the hunger, thirst, extremes of heat and cold, the pain of sun-scorched flesh, the agony of cramped muscles unable to move in our confined quarters?

I'll tell you what was the worst: It was not any one of the factors mentioned above; it was having to live sixty seconds to each minute, sixty minutes to each hour, twenty-four hours to each long, weary, despairing day. It was just the fact of being alive that was intolerable; yet

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oddly enough, not one of us was resigned to die.

The first week of it must have been the worst, for I remember most of it, whereas later, time and happenings are only a disorderly haze in my memory. The strong healthy mind and body instinctively fight and resist the onslaughts of disaster; the debilitated mind and body accept them dumbly, without resistance.

The horror of those first days are beyond the ability of my pen to depict. By day the sun beat down cruelly, roasting our flesh; by night, the damp mists penetrated to the very bones so that it seemed we could never be warm again. Our stomachs lurched with the nausea of starvation; our parched lips cracked with thirst. Poor Slozak was desperately ill from the very start, in delirium a good part of the time. He would cry and cry for his young bride and beg us for water.

The first time he asked for water, Edwards looked at me. I said roughly, "Give him my share."

Edwards dipped his finger into the precious contents of the flask and moistened Slozak's lips. I had to look away or I think the temptation to wrest that flask from his hands and gulp down the water myself would have been too great to resist.

It was awful, that thirst. I used to dream I was lying on my back, mouth wide open, under a faucet of cold running water, gulping it down as fast as I could swallow. It got so, I just didn't think of anything else but three-inch steaks and glasses of foaming beer.

It was apparent about the third day that Slozak wasn't getting any better. His periods of delirium were increasing in violence, and at times we three had to hold him down to prevent his jumping overboard. It was on the evening of the fourth day that he had a brief period of lucidity.

"Does someone know the Lord's Prayer?" he asked timidly.

We three regarded each other in silence, and I could feel myself blush with embarrassment. Praying and going to church were all right for women, but I was ashamed of men who would openly lay bare their souls in this manner.

I squirmed and gazed out over the placid waters, pretending I had not heard his question. Then a deep and vibrant voice began, "Our Father Who art in Heaven . . . "

It was Col. Edwards. A second later Kilpatrick joined him. I couldn't if I had wanted to; I didn't know the words. I had never addressed myself to God in my whole life.

Slozak fell asleep as the prayer ended, and he lay quiet all the night. Toward morning, Edwards who was holding him in his arms, suddenly said, "His hands are like ice. I think he's gone."

Daylight proved his guess correct for Slozak's body was already stiffening. His eyes were open and stared, unblinkingly, into the sun of the new day, and his jaw hung slack. It was the first time in my life I had beheld death. I held on to my nerves with all the will power I possessed. Inside of me I wanted to scream and scream.

After awhile the Colonel said heavily, "There's only one thing to do."

Kilpatrick and I did not answer. We waited a little longer, and then we gently let Slozak down over the side of the raft. I buried my face between my hands and stayed that way until I was sure he would be gone from sight. I was reminded, incongruously, of the nursery rhyme about the birds sitting on a fence. One by one they flew off until "there were none." I began to laugh wildly, uncontrollably. Edwards laid his hand on my arm, and I quieted down.

On the sixth day we had rain, and it was a godsend. After that I began to lose track of time. The sun rose out of one corner of the sea; it set in another. That was a day—but what day, the ninth, the sixteenth? What difference did it make; who cared? We talked little. Each man sat alone in his silence.

Scenes of my life wandered, a disorderly, disconnected panorama, through my mind. A prof at college who had said to me, "You have a good mind, Halsey, but frivolous. Too much money has robbed the world of a possible leader." What had he meant?

Sandy saying, "Everyone should work to give his life some meaning, some purpose." That blonde in the bar on Pearl Harbor day, "You'll parade up Broadway and we'll all throw ticker tape at the conquering hero."

It seemed far more likely the sharks were going to welcome the hero first.

Looking back now, it didn't appear like much of a life. The happenings that had passed for fun seemed pretty silly. Had I ever been really happy? Yes, a little. A few unspoiled hours with Sandra. The moment my wings had been pinned on my breast. That glow in my heart when my commanding officer had said to Col. Edwards, "I'm giving you Lieut. Halsey because he's our best man."

I had wasted my life and its golden opportunities, made Sandra unhappy in spite of my love for her. Even this misadventure I blamed myself for; I had been too reckless, thinking not so much of the safety of my companions as my wish to live dangerously, that I might forget Sandra.

FROM time to time we were lucky enough to catch a few fish. We would slit them open and divide them into three parts almost before they had ceased flapping. It was Kilpatrick who suggested we use our toes as bait for shark. We caught one about three feet long and ate the liver while it was still warm from the shark's body. Devouring it, I remembered how I had always detested liver.

More days passed. Sandra was with me a great deal, always smiling. How I had loved her, and yet how selfish my love had been! I wished so much that I could tell her I was sorry for everything—that she had been right; I, wrong. She'll never know, I kept thinking. I wish she could have known that at the end I was different.

And then on the morning of the twenty-seventh day, the sound, the sound of a plane, the rhythmic unmistakable drone, drone of an airplane motor! I lifted my head. This, I thought, must be the beginning of the end. I had seen so many mirages of lush green islands; I had held out my hands so often to cold running water that was not there— Now this, the final delusion, the sweet precision of running motors.

Oddly enough, I could see the plane as well as hear it. Miles overhead it flew, a tiny speck moving against the glaring blueness of the skies.

Kilpatrick's voice was a thin reedy quaver. "Halsey, it's a plane!"

I watched its progress in agony of mind. It was too high, traveling too fast; they'd never spot us. But they had to, they had to! The sound of the motors was diminishing; the speck grew yet smaller.

"Oh, God," I cried aloud, "bring them back. You can make them see us, God."

How sweet it was to pray! What a

SALVAGED "little things" HELP SAVE LIVES

strange sense of well-being it gave one to place oneself in trust in the hands of Another Who was stronger.

"You can help us, God. I know it."

About an hour later, the plane came back, flying lower. In the cockpit a tiny square of white waved to us. They had seen us We were saved! Edwards, Kilpatrick and I—three dead men—emerged from the tomb and re-entered the world of the living.

Edwards and Kilpatrick recovered fairly rapidly at the army hospital to which we were taken, but I didn't do so well. I had acquired a fine case of rheumatism which swelled my joints and made a cripple of me. Finally they flew me across the Pacific to a San Francisco hospital.

I was a hero, in the public eye. Apparently, Col. Edwards had had a lot to say about my coolness and courage and stubbornness. I still don't think I deserved the praise I received.

About the sixth day that I was in San Francisco my nurse came into my room one afternoon, and with no explanation, took out my comb and brush and began slicking back my hair. "Hey, what do you think you're doing?" I asked.

"Making you presentable for company," she said.

"Have a heart," I begged. "I'm getting fed up with interviews."

"You won't mind this one." There was a conspiratorial twinkle in her eyes.

I looked up, and there was Sandra coming through the door, in her arms a lovely bunch of flowers. She stopped short within a few feet of the bed as though undecided whether she should come closer.

Her first words were, "Sky, you're so thin."

How right, how good the world became when Sandy was with me! "I've been on a Hollywood diet," I wisecracked.

She burst into passionate weeping and wrung her hands, but still she came no closer.

"Sandy," I said, "do you still care a little for me?"

I held out my hand to her, and she took it and caressed it with her lips and her tears fell all over it. Gosh, it was such a bony hand and so darn weak it couldn't hold her to me tightly enough.

"I never stopped caring. If you still want me back, Sky, I'll come on your terms," she said.

I answered her out of the fullness of my heart. "I don't know what sort of fellow you'll find me, but I can promise you this, Sandy, I'm not the same one you married two years ago."

Providence has seen fit to give me a second chance. It is so wonderful to be alive, to be back on American soil, to be regaining health and vigor, to have Sandra with me—yet less than a year ago I took all these things so much for granted.

I was a spendthrift, scattering my youth and my talents to the winds of pleasure, yet never knowing true joy; the joy of work and accomplishment; the joy of quiet things like home and wife.

Soon I hope to be well enough to return to active service. In the meantime I am instructing other eager young fledgelings to fly. I am integrated at last—one will, one body, consecrated to service.

When someone says, "What's it all about anyhow, this business of living?" I smile secretly, for I know. We are here to work, to make this world a better place, a clean and shining place, for our fellow man and for our children who are to follow us some day. Life is, indeed, what we make it!

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...WATCH OUT!

WE WANT TO WARN YOU, before you read this page, that you've got to use your head to understand it.

We also want to warn you that—if you don't bother to read it carefully enough to understand it—you may wake up after this war as poor as a church mouse.

• • •

This year Americans are going to make —minus taxes—125 billion dollars.

But this year, we civilians are not going to have 125 billion dollars' worth of goods to spend this on. We're only going to have 80 billion dollars' worth. The rest of our goods are being used to fight the war.

That leaves 45 billion dollars' worth of money burning in our jeans.

Well, we can do 2 things with this 45 billion dollars. One will make us all poor after the war. The other way will make us decently prosperous.

This way the 45 billion dollars will make us poor

If each of us should take his share of this 45 billion dollars (which averages approximately $330 per person) and hustle out to buy all he could with it—what would happen is what happens at an auction where every farmer there wants a horse that's up for sale.

If we tried to buy all we wanted, we would bid the prices of things up and up and up. Instead of paying $10 for a dress we're going to pay $15. Instead of $5 for a pair of shoes we're going to pay $8.

This bidding for scarce goods is going to raise prices faster than wages. Wages just won't keep up.

So what will people do?

U. S. workers will ask for more money. Since labor is scarce, a lot of them will get it. Then farmers and business men who

feel the pinch are going to ask more money for their goods.

And prices will go *still higher.* And the majority of us will be in that same old spot again—only worse.

This is what is known as Inflation.

Our government is doing a lot of things to keep prices down . . . rationing the scarcest goods, putting ceiling prices on things, stabilizing wages, increasing taxes.

But the government can't do the *whole job.* So let's see what *we* can do about it.

This way the 45 billion dollars will make us prosperous

If, instead of running out with our extra dough, and trying to bid on everything in sight, we buy only what we absolutely need, we will come out all right.

If, for instance, we put this money into (1) Taxes; (2) War Bonds; (3) Paying off old debts; (4) Life Insurance; and (5) The Bank, we don't bid up the prices of goods at all. And if besides doing this we (6) refuse to pay more than the ceiling prices; and (7) ask no more for what we have to sell—no more in wages, no more for goods—*prices stay where they are now.*

And we pile up a bank account. We have our family protected in case we die. We have War Bonds that'll make the down payment on a new house after the war, or help us retire some day. And we don't have taxes after the war that practically strangle us.

Maybe, doing this sounds as if it isn't fun. But being shot at up at the front isn't fun, either. You have a duty to those soldiers as well as to yourself. You *can't* let the money that's burning a hole in your pocket start setting the country on fire.

★ ★ ★

This advertisement, prepared by the War Advertising Council, is contributed by this Magazine in co-operation with the Magazine Publishers of America..

KEEP PRICES DOWN!

Use it up
Wear it out
Make it do
Or do without

Somewhere We Lost Our Love

[CONTINUED FROM PAGE 37]

enough to pay my rent and feed Donny and me, but it doesn't leave much over."

"Umm," she said, her voice flat with disappointment. "I know how that is, in fact I'm pretty broke right now myself or I'd stake you to a hundred or two. What we need is a good hot tip on the races, but the way my luck's been running lately—"

She broke off, her eyes brightening, and suddenly she clapped her hands. "I've got it! Jeff Cornell's in town. I read in the paper, he arrived last week. Maybe I can get him on the phone this noon. Look, kid, you can dig up a ten spot, can't you?"

"Why, yes, I've an extra ten dollars, if you need it. But what—"

"Never mind! Don't ask any questions. Just hand it over."

I WAS giving Donny his early supper that night when Claire beat an excited rat-a-tap-tap on my door. When she came in her hands were full of bills that she flung down on the table.

"Two hundred smackers!" she said. "Count 'em, baby. Two hundred beautiful smackers! Jeff picked us a twenty to one shot and I put your ten on the nose, along with ten of my own. Gawd, I wish I'd hocked my rings and made a real killing, the way that nag romped in. But at least we've made up a little spending money."

I couldn't believe at first that the money really belonged to me. The phrases Claire used meant nothing to me; she had to explain that there were three ways of betting on a horse—win, place, show—and that "on the nose" meant betting on him to come in first. I was amazed to find you didn't have to attend a horse race to place a bet. Claire had taken my ten dollars and her own to a bookie and bet them on a horse whose name Jeff Cornell had given her.

"But I didn't even know that I was betting, Claire. I didn't understand that was why you wanted the ten. This isn't mine."

"Sure it is. You'd have lost the ten all right if that nag hadn't beaten the field. So the winnings are yours."

"It—it doesn't seem possible. Why, I've never bet a nickel in my life."

"I know it. That's why we were lucky. I had a hunch it would be like that. I'm a great believer in beginner's luck. That's why I badgered Jeff into giving me a tip. He didn't want to when I phoned him, but I finally made him admit he was backing this long shot himself. Only he was betting on the horse to show and so he didn't win nearly as much. Just wait till I tell him we put it on the nose! Boy, will he be burned up, and will he listen to me the next time I have a hunch!"

"Is he—this Jeff Cornell—a special friend of yours, Claire?"

"No, not special, worse luck!" Claire said with her wry grin. "He's a grand guy and just about the handsomest thing in shoe leather, but he hasn't much use for women—gambling's his racket. Jeff will bet on anything from a race to the turn of a card, but he leaves liquor and ladies severely alone. I don't mean he's a hermit. He'll take a pretty girl out and show her a good time, but that's as far as it goes. Maybe he'll be at my party next Saturday night. He wouldn't promise, but there's a chance he'll drop in."

It was Claire who took me shopping and picked out the dress I wore to that party, a lovely thing of soft shimmering pale green, embroidered in gold. It was Claire who found a reliable woman to stay with Donny. So I had no excuse, no reason at all for refusing to go. I didn't even understand why I was so reluctant to go.

Yet somehow the reluctance persisted in me. Looking back, it almost seems as if I had a premonition that it was more than a party I was going to that night, as if something in me knew that when I crossed the hall to Claire's apartment I'd be stepping into a new world, a new way of life.

I'd never met people like the ones who jammed Claire's small apartment, overflowing from the living room into the bedroom and out into the kitchenette and breakfast nook. They were a smart sophisticated, hard-drinking crowd and their talk was all of things I did not understand—the racing season, the night clubs, the latest scandals in society.

"Honey, you look eighteen and pretty enough to eat," Claire whispered to me as she greeted me at the door. "You'll simply slay the men in rows! If I were a jealous woman I'd never let you in here. But come on and meet the gang."

With her arm around my waist, Claire raised her voice to shout above the din. "Gang, this is Beth Mason, a special friend of mine. She's a stranger down here and doesn't know anyone. Be nice to her!"

They tried to be nice to me, those friends of Claire's, but I didn't know how to enter into their talk or respond to their gay, flip badinage. All the rest of them seemed well acquainted, and after a few strained efforts at conversation to which I answered monosyllabically, they soon lost interest in me and turned to each other.

Hour by hour the party grew more hilarious while my own spirits sank lower. I stayed put in a chair, a fixed smile on my face, as I took occasional little sips from my glass to make the drink last a long time.

Claire was too busy acting as hostess to pay much attention to me. "Having fun, baby?" she'd call to me, and I'd wave and make my smile brighter. But I wasn't having fun, I was feeling small and cold and forlorn that moment before midnight when the door opened again and Jeff Cornell came in.

I knew at once who he must be, for Claire had said, "He's the handsomest thing in shoe leather" and this stranger was easily the best looking man I'd ever seen. He was tall and lean with an almost quicksilver grace of movement. His eyes and his hair were dark, his teeth very white against his sun-bronzed skin. There was something about him, an arrogance, an air of bold and reckless adventuring, that made every woman in the room instantly conscious of his presence.

Against my will I found my eyes following him as he spoke to Claire and then to various other people in the room. It wasn't until he turned suddenly and his glance met mine that I realized how I was staring at him. For a second our eyes held and I could not look away, could not free myself from that brilliant, darkly sardonic gaze that seemed burning a path to me across the room. I felt the hot color rising in my cheeks as with an effort I forced my glance down into my almost empty glass. A moment later Jeff Cornell followed the path his gaze had burned across the room to where I sat.

"Hello there," he said, not waiting for an introduction but perching himself casually on the arm of a chair close to mine. "I'm Jeff Cornell, and I've never

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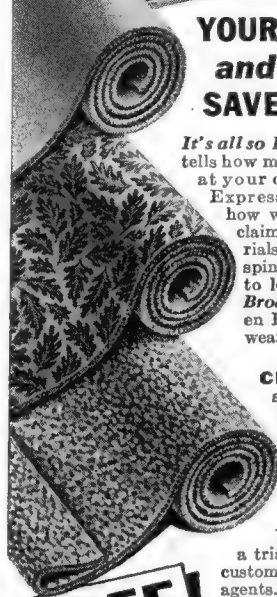

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seen you before. What's your name and where do you come from?"

In any other man I would have resented the challenging, intimate almost insolent tone. But Jeff Cornell's smile, a smile that was surprisingly boyish and eager and sweet, made anything he said disarming. As Claire expressed it later, "with that little-boy grin of his, Jeff can not only get away with murder, but make you think that murder's an admirable affair!"

Something stirred in me, an excitement, an awareness of myself, a confusion of pulses I'd never thought to feel again. "I'm Beth Mason," I told him, "and I come from Connecticut."

"*Miss* Mason, I hope," he began blithely, and then stopped at the look in my face. His smile went away, and the boldness went out of his eyes leaving them curiously gentle. "Evidently I've made a faux pas," he said. "I'm sorry."

"It's all right. I'm Mrs. Mason—but only for another two months." Before I'd met Claire I'd never have told a stranger this, but now the words came easily enough. I could manage to say almost casually, "I'm down here for the necessary ninety days to establish residence for a divorce, but thirty of them have gone."

"I see. What a blundering idiot I am! Then you are the girl across the hall Claire's been telling me about."

I felt the color rushing into my cheeks.

Jeff Cornell dropped his hand over mine for an instant and gave my fingers a quick squeeze. "Don't look so embarrassed, youngster," he said. "All of us are in the same boat, you know. I mean—there's hardly a person in this room who hasn't been divorced at least once."

I looked up at him quickly, wondering yet not able to ask,

"You, too?"

Again he answered a thought I had not put into words.

"Yes, I too. I married when I was just a kid, and it lasted less than a year. Then Helen found herself a richer man. It was quite a joke on her the way it turned out, because that rich man lost his fortune and it was right after she left me that I began to make a lot of money."

Again his hand dropped to mine and as quickly moved away. "You are beautiful, you know," he said softly. "You're lovely in a way I'd forgotten a girl could be. You're like a day in April, like the first spring flowers—"

He stopped himself with a laugh, a boyish embarrassed laugh and I saw with amazement that he was coloring as self-consciously as I myself had done. "Heck," he said, "I'm talking like a bally poet, and that's a new role for me! But there's something about you, little Beth Mason—"

He didn't finish the sentence except with his smile. A moment later someone called him and he got to his feet to join a group across the room. We did not talk again that night, but the words he had said stayed with me—the lovely, lovely words that eased the pain at my heart and set my spirits soaring with a new surge of confidence.

AFTER the party was over and I was back in my apartment, I stood for a long time at the mirror, wanting to see myself as Jeff had seen me. My hair shone golden and curled softly about my face, and a month of Miami sun had tanned my skin to a smooth pale gold. Even my eyes were different. A few hours ago they'd seemed too big for my face, sad eyes, haunted with heartbreak and disillusion. But now it was as if candles had been lighted in them.

The same candles that Roger snuffed out, I thought to myself. Roger made me

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feel myself such a poor thing, so utterly unwanted and undesirable. He destroyed all my faith in myself. But Jeff Cornell gave some of it back to me tonight. I'll always be grateful for that. If I never see him again, I won't forget.

I did see him again the very next day. It was Sunday, with Donny home from school; and after lunch Claire and I took him to the beach. Donny was playing at the water's edge with his pail and shovel, Claire and I were stretched out in the sun with bandannas covering our hair, and dark glasses over our eyes, when a deep vibrant voice spoke.

"Hi! I've been looking all over for you. I thought I might find you on this part of the beach."

JEFF took off his beach robe and dropped down in the sand beside us. In white bathing trunks his body was lean and brown and hard, the muscles rippling beneath the skin.

"How are you feeling after last night's jamboree?"

"Fine," I said, and then repeated inanely, "Fine."

"You look it," Jeff's smile approved me. "And you, Claire?"

"If you must know, I've a beastly headache," Claire groused.

"I don't wonder, the number of highballs you had. Claire you're an awful fool—"

"Okay, I'm a fool," Claire snapped. "But you needn't preach just because you don't like the stuff yourself."

"Oh, I like it all right, but drinking's bad business."

"Especially for *your* business," Claire said, giving the words a peculiar emphasis.

"Exactly," Jeff answered coolly. "That's why I learned a long time ago to lay off liquor. It muddles up your thinking and spoils your co-ordination. Gamblers don't drink if they want to stay alive and out of jail."

"Gamblers?" I looked up at him, startled by the way he'd used the word and by something icy in his voice and eyes.

"Sure he's a gambler," Claire broke in before he could speak. "So am I—so are you. Didn't you win two hundred on the races last week, thanks to Jeff?"

"No thanks to me at all," Jeff said. "It was you girls who had the sense to bet him to win."

"I was just playing my hunch about Beth and beginner's luck," Claire said. "Jeff, do you realize this babe-in-the-woods has never so much as seen a horse race or a dog race or a roulette game?"

"Honestly?" Jeff asked me, as obviously amazed as if Claire had said I'd never seen a beef steak or a baked potato. "Well, we'll have to remedy that. You know Tod Cummings, don't you, Claire? Suppose the four of us, Tod and you, Beth and I, drive out to Hialeah Tuesday afternoon?"

"Swell!" Claire agreed. "We've still a little left out of our winnings, enough for a few small bets. How about it, Beth?"

I wanted to go, I wanted terribly to go. But there was Donny. His school was only from nine to one each day. I couldn't leave him.

"Of course you can," Claire said impatiently. "You can get Eliza to stay with him the same way she did last night."

Jeff looked puzzled at the mention of Don's name. "Donny's my small son," I explained. "Here he comes now."

Donny came racing up from the water's edge and stood before me, firmly planted on his sturdy little legs. A wave of love surged through me as I took his hand. He was so big for his age, so strong and beautiful. The sight of him and the sound of his voice were the dearest things in all the world.

"Mommy, kin we go in swimming now? Kin we?"

"In just a few minutes, darling. This is Mr. Cornell—my son, Donald."

"How do you do, Don?" Jeff shook hands with him gravely. Then to me he said, astounded. "Why, it isn't possible that this boy can be your son. You're so young yourself."

It was the rankest sort of flattery, of course. I knew it at the time, but just the same I was pleased. I was even more pleased when Jeff turned away from me and devoted himself to making friends with Donny.

"I'm ready for a swim even if these lazy women aren't," he told Don in the tone of one man to another. "Let's you and I go in together so we can go way out where they'd be afraid! How'd you like to ride on my shoulders out beyond the breakers?"

Donny's eyes danced and he began to jump up and down in his excitement, "Mister, will you really take me? Honest?"

"Sure I will. But don't call me Mister. My name's Jeff. Come along, I'll race you!"

"Last one in's a rotten egg!" Donny shrieked and went plunging through the sand to the ocean. Jeff let him reach it just an instant before he did, and then the two of them were swimming out, so far out that my breath caught and I started to get up in panic.

"Relax, honey," Claire pulled me back. "Jeff's a strong swimmer and Don's perfectly safe with him. Jeff's crazy about kids, that's his soft spot. It's funny, Jeff can be hard as nails where other people are concerned, but let anyone hand him a sob story about a sick or hungry child, and Jeff will dig down in his pockets and hand over everything he has. You needn't have a moment's worry so long as Don's with Jeff."

By the time they came out of the water, the big man, and the small delighted boy, it was plain to see that Jeff and Don were firm friends.

"Mommy, Mommy," Don shouted, "did you see how far out we went? Jeff's going to teach me how to swim like he does, and how to dive and everything! And he's going to take me to a place tomorrow where I kin see crocodiles and alligators and all sorts of funny fish and snakes. Aren't you, Jeff?"

"If your mother will let me," Jeff said, smiling down at him. Then to me, "Don and I have been striking a bargain. He won't mind your leaving him to go to the races with me, if you won't mind it when he and I go off by ourselves tomorrow afternoon. So how about Tuesday? Is it a date?"

"It's a date, and thank you for everything."

Jeff understood me, he knew it was not for myself I was so grateful.

"Gosh, that's a great kid you have, Beth," he told me after Donny had sped away to the shower to wash off the salt water. "I'd give my right arm for one just like him!"

That night as I gave Donny his supper and put him to bed, his chatter was all of "my pal, Jeff." When Tuesday came it was of Donny that Jeff kept talking as we drove to Hialeah.

Claire and Tod Cummings were in the back seat of the long low-slung, cream-colored convertible. Their heads were bent over a racing form as they argued the merits of various horses. Jeff was driving and I sat beside him, the breeze whipping my hair, the drenching sunlight hot on my cheeks.

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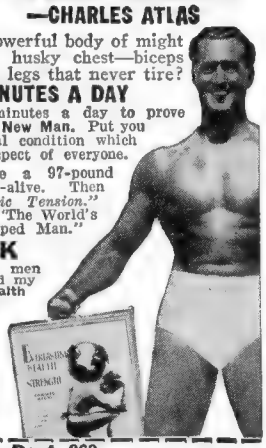

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"No, Donny's completely mine. I'd never have consented to a divorce on any other terms. Besides, his father doesn't want him. He's going to remarry immediately, and his second wife—"

"Doesn't want her life cluttered up with a step-son," Jeff finished the sentence for me. "I see. Well, that's a break for both you and Don. It's hard on a boy to be torn between two homes."

"It's hard on him to have no home at all, to grow up without a father," my bitterness, always so near the surface, flared. "Don keeps asking about his Daddy and when we're going home, and I don't know what to tell him. He loves it down here, but naturally he takes it for granted we're going back to Woodbury."

"You're not going back there, of course." Jeff made it a statement, not a question.

"I don't know—I just don't know. I can't make plans or think that far ahead. One minute I tell myself I'll never go back to Woodbury, that it would be too humiliating and the next minute I think that for Don's sake I have to go back, that I haven't any choice."

"But why?"

"I don't know where else we can live. Our home is in Woodbury and all our friends."

"Not all of them," Jeff corrected me quickly. "I live in New York most of the time, and it isn't such a bad place to bring up a boy. There are good schools, and parks for him to play in. You could easily find a place—"

"Nothing I could afford. You see, Jeff, I'll have a very small income to live on, not more than eight or nine hundred a year. In Woodbury I could manage on that for Donny, by taking a school teacher to board or something like that. But in New York I'd have to get a full time job to increase my income, and Donny's pretty small for me to leave him all day."

"Yes, he's pretty small," Jeff agreed. He was threading the car through traffic and now he speeded it to pass a truck. It was a minute before he spoke again, and when he did the words he said were so utterly unexpected that they left me gasping.

"But you don't need to leave him for a job, Beth, or go back to Woodbury either. Not if you marry again. Not if you'd be willing—to marry me!"

"Marry you!" Why, this was only the third time we'd met, we barely knew each other. "You—you must be joking."

"No, I'm not joking." Jeff's eyes were on the road ahead, his hands were tight on the steering wheel. He was not looking at me or touching me, there was no caress in his voice. His words came jerkily, raggedly, as if they surprised him almost as much as they did me.

"I never thought this could happen to me, Beth, that I could fall in love again the way I've fallen for you. But that very first night at the party, all the time I was talking to you, my heart kept telling me that you were the one girl in the world for me—the one for whom I'd been waiting. Sunday afternoon when I saw you with Donny, with that wonderful kid, then I was sure—"

"Jeff, I'm sorry—"

"Don't say it, Beth. Don't say anything right now. I'm not asking you to marry me, I know it's much too soon for that, I'm just telling you how it is. I know you're not a bit in love with me, but you do like me, don't you?"

"I like you a lot, Jeff, but—"

"But you're still in love with your husband," Jeff interrupted harshly. "You

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haven't had time to get out of the habit of loving him. You're still hoping that by some miracle he'll come back to you and Don. But he won't come back! And in the meantime I'll be right here on the job. I'm going to stay in Florida until you get your decree. Maybe, maybe by that time—"

He turned to me then, his eyes leaving the road for a second, his hand dropping to cover mine. "Maybe by that time things will be different, Beth. Don't worry, I won't talk of this again, not until you want me to, I promise."

A few minutes later we arrived at Hialeah. As Jeff parked the car, Claire and Tod Cummings, utterly oblivious of the amazing conversation between Jeff and me, were still arguing heatedly about the horses scheduled to run that afternoon.

"Jeff," Claire demanded, "what's your choice in the fourth—Golden Boy or Red Harvest?"

"Neither," Jeff said, and suddenly he laughed, a low, joyous, triumphant laugh. "My money's on a dark horse called Second Chance."

"Why—why you're crazy!" Tod Cummings spluttered. "That nag will be left at the post. He's never been in the money."

"He will be today," Jeff said. "Today he'll romp in ahead of the field!"

"That's what you think!" Claire said scornfully.

"That's what Beth and I both think, isn't it, honey?" The low compulsion of Jeff's voice, the blazing demand of his eyes, roused a sudden wild excitement in me.

"I think—there's no such horse," I spluttered, "but if there is—"

I opened my purse and took from it all the money I had with me, twenty-two dollars. "If there is, I—I'm putting this on the nose!"

"Good girl," Jeff said in a whisper.

I'm not going to attempt to describe that afternoon at Hialeah. Unless you've been there, stood in the drenching sunlight that gleams on the grass and the palm trees, on the shining coats of the horses and the incredible loveliness of the pink flamingoes, you can't possibly imagine the strange exotic beauty of that scene. And because I'm not a writer but just a woman trying to tell her story, I don't know how to put in words the excitement that sweeps you into a wild, shouting mad passion as the race nears its finish.

Always I'd been a quiet person, a shy person, yet before that afternoon was over I was standing on my seat, shrieking exhortations at the jockeys bent so closely over their straining horses, trying to urge them on by the sheer force of my own feverish desire.

More than once Claire had to pull me down and quiet me with her laughing, "Take it easy, baby!" To her, and Jeff, and Tod Cummings, this was an old story. They placed their bets casually. They lost with a shrug of the shoulders, won with no more than a flicker of satisfaction in their eyes. But to me it was all new and wildly intoxicating. I was dazed, half drunk with excitement by the time the last race was won and we totaled our winnings.

I'd gone to the race track with twenty-two dollars; I left it with my pocket-book bursting with the bills for which I'd cashed in my tickets. Not all the horses I'd bet on had won, in fact, not half of them had. But I'd placed only small bets on the losers and taken my big gamble on Second Chance who, after getting off to a slow start, had put on a spurt of speed that carried him past horse after horse till he won in a photo-finish.

"I'm nearly five hundred dollars ahead," I told Jeff breathlessly as the four of us drove up to Palm Beach for dinner to celebrate our good fortune. "I've never had so much money in my life, I've never seen so much! When I think of the times I've walked miles to save five cents on my shopping, of the hours I've worked to earn five dollars, and then five hundred in one afternoon—I just can't believe it! It's too marvelous to be true."

"You child!" Jeff said, tender, teasing laughter in his voice. "Anyone would think you'd just discovered Santa Claus. And what are you going to do with all this money?"

"Spend it!" I answered promptly. "That's the most wonderful part of it, that it's mine to spend with a clear conscience, that it isn't household money, something that's only mine to manage. It belongs to me entirely!"

Spending money! I did not realize then the significance of those two words, that gambling money is always spending money, something to throw away as recklessly as it's been gained. A gambler takes no thought of tomorrow or he wouldn't be a gambler. I wasn't stopping to think that every dollar I won was a dollar someone else had lost. Not till later was I to know that gambling dollars are soiled with misery and destitution, stained with the blood of despair. For the present I was too thrilled, too wildly elated with my sudden riches.

All my life I'd had to budget carefully, force every quarter to do double duty, but now I could splurge! I could buy those evening frocks I'd need for dates with Jeff, even a short coat of summer fur, perhaps. I could hire Eliza by the week instead of by the hour to take care of Donny.

"But I won't spend all of it," I said suddenly out of my dream. "I'll put aside at least a hundred for next week's bets."

I didn't understand why Claire gave a short, mirthless laugh. "You sure learn fast," she said. "For an innocent little country kid, it hasn't taken you long—"

"Shut up!" Jeff snapped at her. "Leave Beth alone. She's happy, isn't she?"

Happy? No, that wasn't the word for what I felt that night. Happiness was the thing I'd known with Roger and Donny,

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it was being safe and beloved and needed. The elation and thrill that filled me now were no substitute for that lost joy, but at least they helped me to forget my loneliness and pain. The pain was still there, crushed down in the cold emptiness of my heart, but in this gay company I could deny them for a time, I could laugh instead of weep.

I needed to laugh, I needed to escape the torment that stabbed me every time I imagined Eloise and Roger together while I was alone, humiliated, cast-off.

"If only they could see me now," the fierce exultant thought went through me, "in this gorgeous car with this handsome man! Wouldn't Roger be burned up! Wouldn't Eloise's eyes pop out of her head!"

It's queer how clearly I remembered how I thought that, not knowing it was a thought that was to take possession of me, a thought that held as great a danger for me as the gambling fever that had started to burn in my blood.

We had dinner that night at the Colony where the lights were like something out of a dream of paradise and the colors seemed to seep into me until I was lost in enchantment. We danced to an orchestra so sweet that it hurt, and beneath the low throb of the music Jeff's voice was a warm caress.

"Beth, little Beth, so small, so sweet, so dear," he said. "I think I've always known you'd be like this. That first night I saw you I had the most curious feeling that I was recognizing you, that your face had been there in my mind all the time just waiting for me to turn the page. Do you know what I mean?"

"I know you're being very silly," I tried to laugh away the responding stir of emotion in me.

"You know something very different from that, Beth. You know that this has been a red-letter day in my life, that I was the happiest man in the world when Second Chance nosed ahead this afternoon and came in a winner."

"You won a great deal, didn't you, Jeff? You were betting ten dollars for my every one. You must have cleaned up a good five thousand."

"Something like that," Jeff admitted indifferently. "But you know that's not what I mean. You know it was more than a horse race I was betting on this afternoon. I was betting, and so were you, on a second chance for us. Both of us were nearly destroyed by unhappy first marriages. But when that horse won it was an omen, a sure omen, that there's that second chance for us!"

IT REALLY seemed, those weeks that followed, that Jeff and I had started a winning streak there was no stopping. Again and again we went to the races, and though we never had the sensational success that we did that first time, we always came out ahead. One night Jeff took me to a private gambling club just outside Miami, and for the first time I saw a roulette wheel spinning and watched the little ball click into place and the croupier raking in the chips.

"Try it, honey," Jeff kept urging me, until at last I bought a hundred dollars worth of chips and risked them on the odd numbers. At first I lost and so did Jeff who waited until I'd selected a number and then pushed his own on to it. I was down to my last ten dollar chip and had told Jeff that when that was gone I was not buying any more but intended to stop playing, when our luck turned. By the end of the evening we'd recouped all our losses and were several hundred dollars ahead.

Ordinarily Jeff took his winnings or his losses with a deadpan expression and no slightest show of feeling, but this night he was jubilant. "What did I tell you, honey? You're a natural! You've brought luck to all of us. I was losing money hand over fist until I met you and now I'm way ahead of the game. Claire was just about flat busted when she teamed up with you and now she's in the chips. You're our good luck charm, no doubt about it!"

The very next day Claire told me that she was leaving Miami. There were still several weeks before I'd get my divorce decree but Claire already had hers, so there was no necessity for her staying longer.

"It was only because I was busted that I didn't blow this town long ago," she said. "But now I've a two thousand dollar stake, and for once I'm quitting while I'm still ahead of the game."

"But, Claire, we're having such fun, and you could win a lot more."

"Yeah? Maybe, or maybe I'll lose the two thousand if I hang on a month longer. That happens you know, Beth. It's happened to me before this. Lady Luck can turn against you just as fast as she's started smiling at you; and when she does you start hitting the toboggan fast! You want to listen to me, baby, I'm the gal who knows."

I didn't listen to her; I didn't want to listen. Instead, I did my best to persuade Claire to stay on.

"Nope," she said firmly, "this one time in my life I'm going to act sensibly. I've a cousin in Cleveland, Ohio, who's started a dress shop that's doing pretty well. With more capital it might be a big success. Anyhow, I'm buying an interest in it and, who knows, I may end up an honest woman yet!"

Claire's voice was flippant but her eyes were deadly serious as she went on. "If you've a grain of sense left in that excited little head of yours, Beth, you'll follow my example. The moment you get your decree and that twenty thousand, you'll light out of this town and get yourself established in some business before somebody plays you for an awful sucker. Miami's no place for a babe-in-the-woods like you."

"Thanks for your advice," I answered her, offended. "But I'm quite capable of managing my own affairs."

"That's what you think! Why, you dumb little sap—"

Claire stopped and lighted a fresh cigarette from the end of the first. Her lips twisted into their wry smile, but her eyes were full of friendliness as she looked at me. "Sit down, Beth," she said, "and listen to your Auntie Claire while she tells you a few of the facts of life. Heaven knows it's time that someone did."

"I don't know what you mean."

"I know you don't; that's why I'm telling you. I've grown fond of you, fond enough to cut my own throat by spilling the truth. Beth, why do you think I scraped acquaintance with you the way I did, why do you think I've gone to so much trouble taking you shopping and picking out your clothes and fixing it for you to meet people? Just because I took a sudden fancy to you? Don't fool yourself. I was working you for all you were worth! Every shop we've gone to, I've collected a commission on the clothes you've bought."

Astounded, I stared at her, too shocked to believe my ears.

"That hands you a jolt, doesn't it? I want to open your eyes to what this world is like. That first day I met you I was down on my luck, almost flat broke. That dog I divorced didn't make any settlement on me and I'm not getting any alimony either. I came down to Miami with just about enough to pay my lawyer and my rent. I've had to depend on my wits for the rest."

Harshly her voice went on, telling me how a woman on her own, with no money, lives on her wits in a town like Miami. Men buy her dinners and furnish the liquor for her parties. They give her tips on the races and lend her enough to make her bets. Or if she happens to pass on a winning tip to them, she collects out of the winnings. When you and I got friendly and you spilled the story about that twenty thousand, I thought I could work *you*."

Mockingly her eyes met mine. "It was quite a disappointment to find you wouldn't get that twenty grand for three whole months. But I intended to hang around until you did get it while I thought up a few smart schemes to help you spend it. I could easily persuade you to go to New York with me, use your money to rent us an apartment. Or better still I'd get you to take the advice of certain friends of mine about investing your dough, friends who'd cut me in for a share in the rake-off. That's what I intended in the beginning. But in the meantime . . ."

"Yes?" I demanded, my voice shaking with the cold anger that was surging in me. "In the meantime? What happened to stop you?"

"Several things. In the first place I got fond of you the way I said before. Then you brought me luck that provided me with that two thousand dollars stake so I don't really need to work you for anything. And lastly—Jeff Cornell. It's his hand you're eating out of right now, not mine, and he's told me in a few blunt words to lay off you. He won't stand for any funny business."

"Just what do you mean by that?" I cried. "Do you dare tell me that Jeff's playing me for a dumb little sap, too? That he's after that twenty-thousand?"

There must have been pain in my voice, for all the jibing self-mockery went out of Claire's face and she spoke more gently.

"No, baby," she said. "That's not what I'm getting at. Jeff's in love with you all right, crazy in love. Twenty-thousand's only a drop in the bucket to him right now, he's easily got five times that much put away.

"But just the same, I am warning you against Jeff. I don't expect you'll pay me any attention but I'll feel better if I say it. Jeff's bad medicine for a girl like you."

"Why? He doesn't drink. You say yourself he's decent about women? What's wrong with him?"

"He's a gambler, a professional gambler."

She got up and moved to the door. "Well, I've got to finish my packing. I'm taking the sleeper tonight. Let's say good-by as friends, Beth. Or can't you forgive me?"

"Of course I forgive you, Claire, anything there is to forgive."

But my voice was stiff and there was a hot burning behind my eyelids. It was really myself I didn't forgive, that I'd been so easily fooled by her, so much "the dumb little sap." Another faith had been destroyed in my life, the quick and unquestioning faith I'd given her.

Now I had no one but Donny—and Jeff Cornell.

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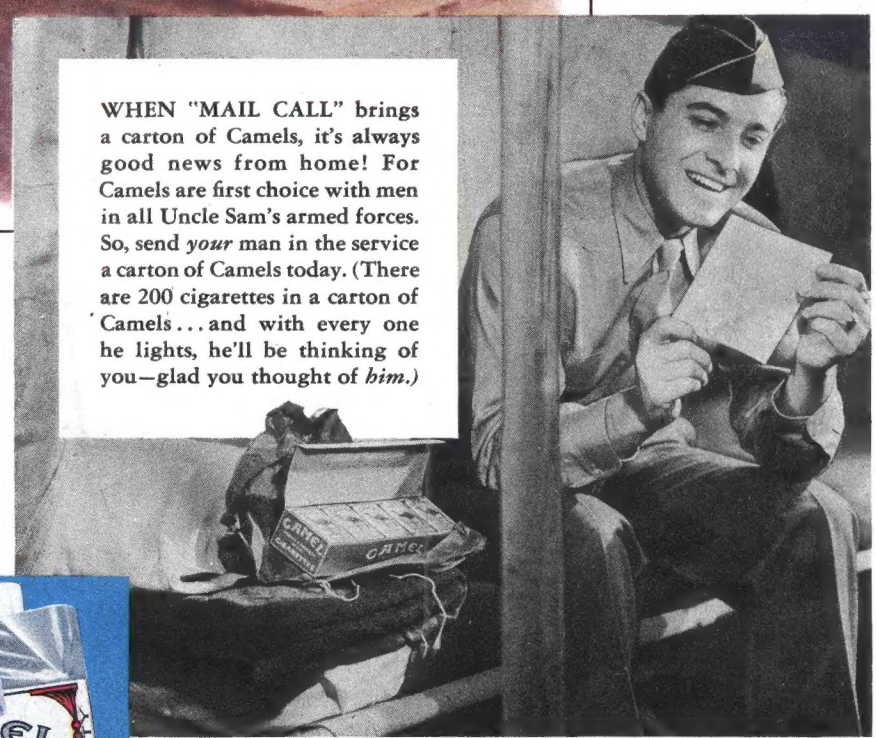

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